

# AN EYE-WITNESS IN MANCHURIA

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W. M. HOLMES

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

At the beginning of March, 1932, I made a journey, as a newspaper correspondent, to Manchuria. Since September, 1931, the country had been under Japanese military occupation and, in all the main centres, was ruled by a thinly-disguised Japanese military dictatorship. What were the objectives of the invasion, and what are the aims and policy of Japanese imperialism in Manchuria? The purpose of this pamphlet is to help in answering these questions. Information as to events and developments in Manchuria is difficult to obtain from outside. Never was a system of control and censorship over the cables, and over Press correspondence, internal and external, exercised by any power more thoroughly than by the Japanese in Manchuria. Never was there a more assiduous exercise of espionage over all foreign correspondents, of whatever nationality, and over foreign business people as well.

Under such conditions the observer must travel about the country, using eyes and ears, trying to get at the reality behind the picture painted by the Japanese imperialist propagandists for the edification of foreigners. With this purpose I travelled, trying, wherever I went, to get at facts, and to give a picture of the realities which not only the Japanese imperialists, but their allies in the capitalist Press of the world, try to screen from our view.

W. M. H.

## CHAPTER I

## MAY DAY IN HARBIN

ON the First of May, 1932, I arrived in Harbin, the main town of Northern Manchuria, the junction of the western, eastern and southern sections of the Chinese Eastern Railway, the chief port on the River Sungari, and consequently a great centre of trade.

Harbin has, as you would expect, a large working population—about 300,000 Chinese and 70,000 Russians. It is notorious as a habitation of Russian Whites, active conspirators and provokers of war against the Soviet Union. But not all the Russian population are Whites. The majority of the 70,000 are, of course, workers—many of them very poor. And there is also a section of Soviet citizens, mainly employees of the Chinese Eastern Railway, commonly known among the Whites as “the Reds” or “the Soviets.” Harbin is, therefore, an interesting place in which to find yourself on the day of International Labour. Let us see how it looks.

Our observations begin at the railway station. Here, at least, an effort is being made to tell the world that this is the international day of the working class. The station is ablaze with flags—the curious flag of the Chinese Eastern Railway. The upper half of this flag consists of the yellow colour of the “new State” of Manchukuo, with four bars, red, blue, white and black. And the lower half is the vivid red of the workers’ republic, with the golden hammer and sickle and the five-pointed star. On the railway administration buildings, along the street, dozens of these flags also wave.

Inside the station a demonstration is preparing, and now it begins to emerge. *But it is not at all the sort of procession you were thinking of.* In fact, it is a column of Japanese artillery. Field-guns drawn by shaggy little Manchurian ponies, ridden by stolid-faced, bow-legged little Japanese soldiers, begin to file through the streets. In all, four battalions, complete with equipment, leave the station. They march away to Fuchiatien, the Chinese town, where the Japanese are preparing to send a large expeditionary force down the Sungari river, towards the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, on the bridge where the road to the old Russian town crosses the railway there is another demonstration. A long line of Chinese—or rather “Manchukuo”—police, with rifles and fixed bayonets, stands drawn up across the bridge. Presumably they are there to guard against the supposed “Red plotters” who are credited by the White newspapers with intending to celebrate May Day by blowing up the bridge. We pass across the bridge and into the Russian town, called “Pristan.” At frequent intervals we are passed by patrols of armed police on motor-bicycles and in cars.

Kitaiskaya, the main street, is filled with hundreds of White Russians in holiday dress. The air is full of the clang of church bells. Droschky drivers, in brilliantly coloured silk blouses, are driving pair-horsed vehicles up and down the street at a spanking rate. A holiday promenade is proceeding on the banks of the Sungari, and Chinese boatmen are taking parties for pleasure-trips in gaily-painted little craft. Here, where the railway crosses the river, is another heavy armed guard—this time of Manchukuo troops.

We go on into Fuchiatien, the Chinese town. Here, in the narrow, unpaved, stinking, refuse-littered streets, files of armed police circulate continually. Various large buildings on the water front, belonging to transport companies, are occupied by Japanese troops. The Japanese military flag flies over the roofs, barricades of sandbags and barbed wire flank their entrances and corners, sentries in steel helmets are plentifully distributed. Motor lorries, carrying war materials and supplies, guarded by soldiers with ready rifles, are continually arriving at these buildings. Everywhere is military activity and militarist domination.

The Japanese military headquarters in Harbin have issued an order commandeering practically all the shipping on the Sungari river. Some 60,000 tons of shipping have already been requisitioned. Every worker on the river boats has been placed under martial law. Here is the exact form of the order handed by the Commander of Transportation of the Japanese forces to the Harbin Shipping Association:—

“All members of steamers and barges, from the captain to the deck hand, whether already commandeered or not, must stand by on board for orders to be issued. The wages for the crews of vessels commandeered will be increased by 30 per cent., as an encouragement. Should when being ordered for use, the crew of any vessel not be ready, thus delaying military matters, the owner of the vessel shall be punished according to military law.”

The order is being rigorously enforced. The British skipper of a

river steamer states that several Chinese coolies have already been shot out of hand for objecting to work at the embarkation of Japanese troops or supplies.

The riverside is a scene of ceaseless activity. The Japanese are embarking a brigade, or maybe two, with guns, horses and a large supply of materials and provisions. Their object is stated to be the dispersal of a force of so-called “bandits,” which is said to be operating in the neighbourhood of Sansing and Fancheng, down the Sungari towards the Soviet frontier. But the nature of the expedition and the equipment suggest a permanent military occupation rather than a punitive force against raiders. And a glance at the map will show the significance of the Japanese advance down the Sungari, in conjunction with the movement of troops along the eastern section of the Chinese Eastern Railway and along the Changchun—Kirin—Tunhua Railway. All these movements point in the direction of Vladivostock and the Soviet maritime province north thereof.

Every day, for the past week, long trains of Japanese troops have been coming up the Chinese Eastern Railway from the south. The troops which are being withdrawn from Shanghai are reported on their way here. The military staff is being strengthened, and in due course the Japanese army headquarters in Mukden will be transferred to Harbin.

Is all this intense activity simply to deal with a few thousand Chinese troops whom the Japanese themselves describe with no more dignified name than “bandits”? The new officers who have been added to the staff here are experts in the Russian language.

Many of the cadres are men who had experience in the war of intervention against the Soviets in Siberia in 1920. Is knowledge of the Russian language and of Siberian conditions particularly necessary to a campaign against Chinese “bandits”?

It is a pretence in which no one in Harbin, whether he be Chinese, White Russian, or a British or American observer, ever for one moment professes belief. But the Japanese imperialists have the peculiarity of not bothering to make their pretences even plausible. They don't really mind much whether you believe their lies or not.

To return to the Sungari. All along the waterside at Fuchiatien are drawn up steamers and big barges. Long trains of motor-lorries come continually from the railway depot, bringing supplies of every description. Men, guns and horses are streaming on to the craft. The scene is dotted all over with fluttering Japanese flags.

The steamers and barges are carefully fitted up with defences

of sandbags and steel plates. It is interesting to note that every one of these plates, evidently intended for shipbuilding, bears the mark of a well-known German works and besides, the word "Wladiwostock." They were evidently shipped here, via, Vladivostock, for the building of river steamers. But apparently the Japanese way of commandeering does not stop short at steamers and barges.

As soon as one set of barges is loaded it is tugged out into the broad stream, and another lot takes its place. Higher up the river, a force of Manchukuo, otherwise known as "new Kirin" troops, is being embarked. They are poorly uniformed and equipped, as compared with the Japanese, and they do not appear to have any artillery. Also their craft are not provided with any steel plate defences. It looks almost as though they might be regarded as decoys to draw the fire of snipers along the riverside.

These Manchukuo forces fly a flag which is interesting. It is designed on the same principle as that flown by the Chinese Eastern Railway. But, in this case, the upper portion consists of the Japanese military flag—the plain red sun on a white ground—and the lower portion is the yellow colour of the "new State," with its bars of red, blue, white and black. The interest of this emblem lies in the fact that, hitherto, the Chinese have allowed no other nationality except Russia to fly its flag on the Sungari. But in this case, Japanese imperialism is undeniably on top.

\* \* \* \*

The military trains continue to arrive from the south. A traveller who has just arrived from Changchun tells me that for every two trains which leave that town for Harbin, five, fully laden with troops, go eastward, along the Kirin-Tunhua line. At Changchun the standard gauge South Manchurian track ends, and the broad gauge Chinese Eastern line begins. And, says my informant, the Japanese are busy adapting South Manchurian locomotives to the broader gauge. He saw four converted. The first took fourteen hours, but the second and third were completed in six.

Thus, the Japanese military occupation of North-Eastern Manchuria is going apace. Japanese military headquarters admit the presence in this region of four army divisions—"at peace strength." Unofficial estimates put the number of Japanese troops, not counting the "Manchukuo" army, anywhere between twenty and fifty thousand. Judging by the official admissions, the latter figure is not an exaggeration. Preparations are going ahead for the arrival of the Commander-in-Chief, General Honjo, which is expected to be the signal for decisive movements.

All day long, at Fuchiatien, on the banks of the Sungari, thousands of Chinese crowd on the embankment and watch the process of embarking the troops. They gaze impassively, in silence, neither cheering nor expressing any other kind of feeling. But the feeling is there. The hatred for the Japanese is bitter, deep and wide. But here the domination is endured—there is nothing else for it. The occupation of important buildings throughout the Chinese town, the construction of barbed wire and sandbag defences, the posting of armed pickets wherever the Japanese authorities consider it desirable, all these are outward and visible signs that the real power is in the hands of the Japanese militarists, and not in those of the puppet Chinese municipal council.

The walls of Harbin are at this moment decorated by a proclamation, issued by the Commander of the Japanese Tenth Division, Lieutenant-General Hirose, when he arrived a few days ago to take charge of operations. It is worth giving in full, in its quaint but explicit Japanese-English version. Here it is:—

#### PUBLIC PROCLAMATION.

Having come to Harbin and undertaken the serious responsibility of keeping the Japanese residents safe, as well as the maintenance of general order in the town, I apply to the population with the following enlightenment:

At the present moment the Heavens and the Earth are witnesses of the new life in Manchuria and Mongolia directed towards the joint development and general prosperity of the thirty million native inhabitants and to all other nationals who reside in the country, and this is the guarantee of sincere happiness and peace in the East as well as the welfare of humanity.

The Japanese army, which always stands on the side of justice and humanity, and peaceful relations with its neighbours, desires only the peaceful development of the Manchukuo State, avoiding any unnecessary agitation.

However, if elements are discovered who, by raising harmful agitation, think by so doing to violate peaceful order and the normal relations between Japan and the U.S.S.R., for their own gain, the Japanese Army will take strong measures to suppress such actions.

Drawing the attention of the whole population to the above, I sincerely desire, that they will trust entirely in the actions of the Japanese Army, quieten down as quickly as possible and as before, continue their peaceful business.

Chief of the Japanese Division,  
LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HIROSE.

Harbin, April, 1932.

And Harbin, like all the chief towns of Manchuria, is plastered with other placards in anticipation of the visit of the League of Nations Commission. "Dawn from the East, peace from Geneva," declares one. Another invites us to "Co-operate to make Manchukuo the Geneva of the East." Others speak of the "new era" in the "land of opportunity." Yet another depicts a dove labelled "Manchukuo" flying with a message of peace in its beak.

If you are at all disposed to believe that the Japanese military are really doves, bringing peace to Manchuria, take another look at the scene by the Sungari. A Chinese coolie has penetrated, in some way, and for some purpose, into an enclosure protected by barbed wire and steel-helmeted Japanese sentries. The Japanese soldier who spots him at once takes a run and launches a violent kick on the offender's bare skin. The Chinese betrays no sign of pain or surprise, but faces his assailant with a polite smile. This is necessary, for to show pain would be "loss of face," which is far more serious than a kick on the shin. He then proceeds to retreat slowly, pursued by the sentry, who gives him a kick in the rear as a souvenir of the "new era" which has dawned with the "new State" of Manchukuo.

An American correspondent, standing beside me, watching this little scene, remarks meditatively, "It'll all come back to them a hundredfold, some day." And, indeed, the Chinese masses are not so passive as these scenes on the bank of the Sungari may suggest. There is resistance to the Japanese imperialist domination. Of its form and scope I shall write later. Even in this town, beset by Japanese guns and bayonets, evidence of the opposition meets the eye. For instance, you may see many of the proclamations and posters which I have quoted hanging in tatters from the walls. They were torn down, under cover of darkness, within a few hours of being pasted up. Sometimes, I am told, the very Chinese policemen who are forced to act as billposters, return at night and tear down the Japanese propaganda. Nobody believes in these words, "dawn," "new era," "peace." All eyes are on the ceaseless movement of the Japanese forces towards the frontiers of the U.S.S.R.

Harbin, May 4th, 1932.

## CHAPTER II

### WHAT IS MANCHURIA?

WHAT is Manchuria? The events in this territory, during the past half-year, have received at least as much attention in the Press of Europe and America, as any other happenings, next to the attack on Shanghai and the kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby. Yet I doubt if most readers can picture this country as anything but a dim, remote land, wild and bloody. And most of you would probably share my mild surprise at seeing, before one's own eyes, the riches and development of Manchuria. We are not entirely to blame for our ignorance. The popular Press, on which we have to rely for much of our information, does not give more than the minimum of facts—mainly distorted. Bourgeois politicians deliberately mislead us. The Labour and Socialist International, in a declaration made last autumn, sought to justify the Japanese imperialist occupation of Manchuria by describing the country as a "No Man's Land." The tendency of a large section of the bourgeois Press and politicians is to foster the illusion that Manchuria is a country inhabited by backward, even barbarous, people, ruled by anarchy, in which Japan is fulfilling a civilising mission.

As to the mission of Japanese imperialism, I hope that, by the end of this pamphlet, I shall have left no illusions. And regarding the "No Man's Land" theory, this is decidedly also an illusion. Manchuria is a backward country, in the sense that it is a land of small peasant cultivation and handicraft industries. That is, outside the zones of Japanese jurisdiction. But it is, at the same time, a country of high productivity, a rich provider of raw materials for capitalist industry and fertile soil for the investment of capital. In that fact, and not in any desire to fulfil a "civilising mission," lies the key to the Japanese military occupation.

If you approach Manchuria by sea from the south you arrive at the port of Dairen. This is the main gateway to this territory, which stretches away northward to the frontiers of the Soviet Union, and westward to the borders of Mongolia, covering an area as large as Egypt. Dairen is a Japanese town. It lies in the Kwantung Peninsula, which is leased by Japan. The ship on which you arrive

is Japanese. Your passport is examined by a Japanese police officer. The docks are operated by a Japanese concern—the Manchuria Dock Company—and its officials are Japanese. You will see only one thing which is obviously Chinese, and that is the thousands of coolies who swarm round the ships, toiling at the loading and unloading of cargo. And, if you are familiar with modern European docks, you will be struck by a remarkable thing. Here you see a fine, modern port, with broad quays and accommodation for plenty of big ships. But one thing is lacking. Where is the machinery for handling cargo? Where are the familiar rows of tall, travelling electric cranes? Where are the conveyors and elevators? There is not one. Instead, there are swarms of dark-skinned men, clothed in ragged blue cotton trousers and blouses, streaming in procession from the ships, carrying sacks, bales, packages of merchandise on their shoulders. Heavier packages are slung from a bamboo pole and carried between two men. Those which are heavier still are placed on a two-wheeled cart. A sufficient number of men is harnessed thereto with ropes, and so the merchandise is hauled away to the warehouse. Why all this primitive toil in this modern port? Why no machinery? The reason is simple. It is cheaper to buy Chinese coolies, who can be had by the thousands for tiny wages, than to invest capital in machines. In London, machines are installed to save the cost of labour. In Dairen, men are used to save the cost of machines.

This is the first glimpse of Manchuria, and a hint of what is to be found throughout the country, wherever capitalism has already extended its enterprise. Here is a country of thirty million inhabitants. The vast majority (estimated at 90 per cent. of the total) are Chinese, and of these, again, most are poor peasants. Only 0.8 per cent. of the population are Japanese. Thus we have a tiny imperialist caste exploiting the industry of a huge population.

The little exploiters have very large appetites. You acquire plenty of evidence of this fact before you penetrate any farther into Manchuria than Dairen. This port is the handiwork of Japanese capitalism. And, what is perhaps not widely realised, in volume and value of trade, Dairen is the second port of China—second to Shanghai alone. In 1929, not the year of Dairen's highest prosperity, but just at the beginning of the economic crisis in Manchuria, the tonnage of shipping entered and cleared in this port totalled 14,056,392, and the exports and imports were valued at nearly £51,000,000 (\$255,000,000),\* taking the yen at its par value

\*At par of exchange.

of 2s. This represented 66 per cent. of the total trade of the Manchurian ports during this year. And, by the way, another 13 per cent. was handled by Antung, which is also a Japanese port. So that 79 per cent. of the total shipping trade, valued at over £77,000,000 (\$385,000,000), passed through Japanese capitalist hands. When you remember that the main "machinery" of the Japanese dock companies consists of Chinese coolies at an average wage of about 1s. a day (for a fuller study of wages see pages 24-27), you will realise that this represents a handsome tribute in the form of interest on Japanese investments.

It is not surprising, in view of these facts, to find that Japanese domination is stamped all over Dairen. It is a fine town. Its streets are broad, well paved and clean. Trees and gardens are plentiful. There are plenty of bright, clean and attractive shops, well stocked with all the products of Japanese, American and European factories. You can buy anything from a motor-car to a Japanese fan in Dairen. And the prices of many things, such, for instance, as Japanese leather goods, seem to a European extraordinarily low. You can buy a Japanese imitation of almost everything European or American, including whisky (but beware!), and all, of course, at far cheaper prices than the imported goods. In addition, there are Japanese agents for nearly every kind of Western product. The only big business which does not appear to be in Japanese hands is the supply of petrol. This is general throughout Manchuria, for the Japanese have no oil supplies—although they are making energetic efforts to develop the distillation of oil from shale at the Fushun coal mines, near Mukden. But at present the Standard Oil Company of New York and the Texas Oil Company are able to reap the harvest—in competition, in North Manchuria, with Soviet oil.

To return to Dairen. There are hotels, cinemas, theatres, tea-houses, dancing cafés and all the things which invariably accompany these establishments in "civilised" cities. These, too, are all under Japanese proprietorship. In only one respect does the foreign element creep in—namely, that the enterprising Japanese cabaret and brothel-keeper usually keeps a few White Russian girls, as well as geishas, so that all tastes may be catered for. And there are "medicine shops," for purveying morphine and opium. They are also run by Japanese. Of course, this trade is illegal, according to treaty with the Chinese Government. And no country has stricter laws against the drug traffic, within its own territory, than Japan. But this is Manchuria, and the Japanese dealer has no scruple about engaging in a highly profitable trade. These Japanese drug-dealers



are to be found in all the main centres of Manchuria and Northern China. They import more morphine than is consumed in any other area of the world. Very often their retail depots consist of a "medicine shop" and pawnshop combined. Thus the wretched addict can pawn goods or clothes in order to get a "shot" of the thing without which he cannot live. Often, too, there are rooms behind these stores where drugs can be consumed.

The big dealers in drugs, exceeding even the Japanese, are the British and the French imperialists. Nearly a century ago they fought the Chinese in order to get a "free hand" in these goods.

In general, then, Dairen is a fine city. And all this enterprise is to be credited to the Japanese capitalist. And where do the Chinese, who, after all, mainly populate Manchuria and produce its wealth, come in? I have already told how they may be found at the docks. Here in the streets, they are mostly in evidence as the men who pull the 'rickshaws. They will come running up as you step out of a shop, calling, "Licksaw, master!" dropping their shafts and bending down before you, eager to become your beast of burden. And they will run through the hot streets, hauling you almost any distance for a few coppers. Disgusting and degrading? But they will hate you if you prefer to walk. To be your beast of burden provides them with their only hope of the little food which will keep them going for their short life. And you will never see any old-looking 'rickshaw-coolie.

Here, then, as porters and coolies, the Chinese come in. And where, in this fine city, do they live? If you take the broad motor-road from the centre of Dairen to Hoshigaura, the bathing resort and golf links (yes, the Japanese have also introduced golf) a few miles along the coast, you arrive, on the outskirts of the town, at a suburb of pleasant bungalows and villas, scattered among gardens, with flowering trees, on the hillside. But is this where the Chinese coolies live? Certainly not. But from here you may get your first view of the Chinese town. At some distance from the road, separated by an expanse of bare, brown, dusty land, over which straggles a bumpy track, stretches a collection of small buildings. They appear to be mostly single-storeyed, and there are none higher than two storeys. A dreary monotony of grey-brown, the buildings appear in the distance to be huddled so closely together as to allow no room at all for streets. This is the Chinese town.

Entering its streets, you find them filled with the crowded life which is characteristic of Chinese towns. There is no such thing as a "quiet street." There are only seething alleys in which all

the occupations of human life, and almost all the physical functions, appear to be in progress. There are the broader streets of unpaved earth, with occasionally some planking for sidewalk. Along these a motor-car can bump in slow and painful progress. And there are the side-streets, which can admit only the primitive Chinese two-wheeled cart. In the broader streets are the shops, with open fronts, in which all kinds of goods, familiar and strange, are displayed, and where handicrafts are carried on. These buildings are of an ugly grey brick, or of wood. In the side-streets are the dwellings, or rather hovels. Sometimes these are of unpainted planks. More often they are of sun-dried earth mixed with chopped grass or straw—the same "brick" which the children of Israel made with hatred of their exploiter Pharaoh, thousands of years ago. Packed to the limit of capacity, these dark hovels are the dwellings of the coolies. I need hardly say there is neither lighting nor water supply. The stench which pervades these alleys bears witness to the fact that there is no drainage—even if your own eyes did not tell you that any bare patch of earth does duty for a lavatory, and warn you to pick your steps with care. And the roadways are littered, also, with all other forms of refuse and garbage. The wind blows up the foul dust into nose, eyes and ears. It blows it also over the food displayed in the open shops, and over the wares of the street-vendor of cooked food. For the coolie must naturally eat, as well as live, among all this filth. His housing accommodation would not allow him any domestic economy, even if his wages permitted it. The street is his dining room. He buys his food from the vendor, and, squatting on his haunches on the earth, eats it amid the dust and stench.

You will not now be surprised to observe that, among the numerous crafts plied in the main streets, that of the coffin-maker seems to be thoroughly brisk and busy. In every Chinese quarter, in the main towns of Manchuria, you will find conditions similar to these, and the coffin-shops well stocked and all hands busily making new receptacles. In Fuchiatien, the large Chinese town of Harbin, the coffin-makers are congregated in one portion of a main street. This particular section of street is always a scene of brisk activity. Dozens of skilful hands work continuously in the little shops, cutting, planing, shaping and fitting. And the products of their labours are stacked high in rows along the sidewalk, awaiting transport.

No one knows what is the mortality rate in these Chinese coolie towns. When you watch the children, entirely unwashed, in filthy garments, crawling, running and rolling among all the filth of the

streets, you conclude that only those can survive who develop a special immunity against the bacilli of typhus, cholera and plague. And you will notice that the Japanese troops, most of whom, by the peculiar structure of their noses, are highly susceptible to infection by dust, and who are engaged in patrolling these districts, wear respirators over mouth and nose. The exploited must live, and die, under conditions among which the exploiter fears to enter without protection against infection. Why do the Chinese workers live in such filth? Are they so ignorant that they do not know the value of cleanliness, so degraded that they do not want any better dwelling than a pitch-dark mud hut in the middle of a sea of garbage and excrement? The Japanese imperialists will tell you that these are the reasons—and they will be supported in this by most of the British, Europeans and Americans. So deep is their class contempt for the coolie that he is regarded as of a lower order of being. But why do hundreds of Scottish miners live in overcrowded, dark hovels, with leaky roofs, without drainage, on unpaved, muddy roads? Do they prefer this to good housing? Why do thousands of London workers live in overcrowded slums, where their children get diphtheria through having to play among the rubbish-bins? Why are exactly similar conditions to be found in the mining villages of Kentucky and Alabama, and in the "Hooverville" shack settlements where the American unemployed starve? Everyone knows it is not from choice, but because coal owners and manufacturers pay such small wages that the miner and factory worker cannot afford anything better; and because, even if they could afford it, the capitalist system does not find it profitable to provide good houses for the working class.

Exactly the same reasons apply to Manchuria. It is not the Chinese coolie's nature which makes him live lower than the peasants' swine, but the fact that he has to toil from ten to fifteen hours for a shilling, and he is lucky if he gets as much as a shilling at the end.

There, then, is a glimpse of Manchuria. It is not a "No Man's Land." It is a land of great natural riches, agricultural and mineral. And it has fine modern cities. And it is fully equipped with the most modern types of imperialist exploiters, and with an exploited class,

### CHAPTER III

#### THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY.

MANCHURIA, the Japanese publicists never tire of telling us, is a "land of opportunity." I have before me a highly interesting map, printed in English by some Japanese enterprise. It is entitled "Commercial Map of Manchuria," contains a wealth of information, and bears the encouraging statement, "To-day there is a tendency to make Manchuria a land of opportunity for the world, in co-operation with all countries." It is disarming, appealing, almost touching—this impersonal, philanthropic declaration. It chimes with the sweet tone of the posters you see on the streets, sandwiched between the sandbags, barbed wire and bayonets, proclaiming "Dawn from the East," the "New Era," and so on. All the same, you may be forgiven for asking, for whom is this a land of opportunity?

The land of Manchuria is certainly a coveted prize. Its fertile soil brings forth a wealth of products—natural and cultivated. Vast forests, wide pastures raising herds of horses, cattle and sheep, rich fields bearing heavy crops of the soya bean, whose uses are manifold, of wheat, rice and cotton, vast deposits of coal, iron and oil-bearing shales, precious minerals stored away in the mountains—all these riches make Manchuria a most desirable country. For the opportunity to profit by this wealth, great wars have already been fought. . . . Others are undoubtedly to come. In 1894 the budding imperialism of Japan launched its first blow against China for the "right" to penetrate and exploit this hitherto forbidden land. And in 1895 the Japanese forced the Chinese Government to cede the Liaotung Peninsula, with the port of Yinkow (Newchwang) to Japan. But there was a competitor in the field. Russian imperialism was already driving its way down to open water at the port of Dairen. The Japanese victory was a decided hindrance to the Russian plans. So the Tsar's Government obtained the co-operation of France and Germany. All three Powers concentrated their fleets in North China waters, and, under cover of the guns, "advised" Japan to give back the Liaotung Peninsula to China. The Japanese, unable to fight the united forces of the three Powers, complied.

But, in 1905, Japanese imperialism struck its next blow, and took its revenge. Its booty from the Russo-Japanese war was far richer than the lost peninsula with its relatively little river port of Newchang. Japan now had possession of the modern port of Dairen and the new railway, right up to Changchun. Manchuria had become, for Japan at least, something more than a "land of opportunity."

The Japanese imperialists lost no time in profiting by their gains, and preparing to extend them. The Russo-Japanese War was concluded by the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth on September 5, 1905. On December 22 of the same year the Japanese imperialists forced the Chinese Government at Peking to sign an agreement "that all materials required for the railways in South Manchuria shall be exempt from all duties, taxation and likin" (likin is taxation levied on goods in transit). Secret protocols were added to this agreement stipulating that, in order to protect the interests of the Japanese-owned South Manchuria Railway, the Chinese were not to construct "any main line in the neighbourhood of and parallel to that railway, or any branch line which might be prejudicial to the interests of the above-mentioned railway." Another stipulation was that, before opening any towns in Manchuria to foreign trade, the Chinese Government must consult the Japanese Minister in Peking.

Backed, as these demands, as well as a long series of subsequent ones, were, by a modernised navy and army ready for immediate use, the Japanese imperialists found little difficulty in forcing them on the Chinese.

And so, during the last quarter of a century, Japanese imperialism has been penetrating Manchuria, working towards the great day when it shall become a part of the Japanese Empire. Competing with, yet aided by, the other imperialist Powers, notably Britain, the Japanese have forced more and more demands on the Chinese. The present situation—the intervention of last autumn, the setting up of the puppet new State of Manchukuo, the Japanese military occupation and the military rule in the north, are all quite logical developments of the policy so long pursued by the Japanese imperialists in collusion with the other Powers. In the Twenty-One Demands forced by Japan on China, at the point of the bayonet, in 1915, were the following points regarding Manchuria:—

Extension of the lease of Port Arthur and Dairen and of the South Manchuria Railway and Antung-Mukden Railway to 99 years:

Permission for Japanese subjects to lease lands and to enter, travel and reside in South Manchuria for trade, manufacture and agriculture:

Opening of more towns in Eastern Inner Mongolia to international trade:

If China proposes to build railways in Manchuria and Eastern Inner Mongolia by means of foreign loans, she must call first on Japanese capital:

Nine mining districts in Manchuria to be opened to Japanese enterprises:

In case of the employment of foreign advisers or instructors in political, financial, military and police matters in Southern Manchuria, China must give preference to Japanese.

While the documents which I have quoted show the real line of penetration and exploitation of Manchuria as a Japanese colony, the pretence of the "land of opportunity," and the "open door," has always been maintained. The understanding between Japan and the United States, known as the "Lansing-Ishii Agreement," reached on November 2, 1918, states that:

"The Governments of the United States and Japan deny that they have any purpose to infringe in any way the independence or territorial integrity of China, and they declare, furthermore, that they always adhere to the principle of the so-called 'Open Door' or equal opportunity for commerce and industry in China. Moreover, they mutually declare that they are opposed to the acquisition by any government of any special rights or privileges that would affect the independence or territorial integrity of China, or that would deny to the subjects or citizens of any country the full enjoyment of equal opportunity in the commerce and industry of China."

As a piece of imperialist bluff and hypocrisy this is good. At the time when it was concocted all the declarations in this document had already been repeatedly denied by deeds, and, since its publication, the Japanese policy of continual penetration further and further into Manchuria has been only a part of the general imperialist line of carving up China without the slightest regard for "independence and territorial integrity."

While the Japanese imperialist grip on Manchuria was tightening, others were, of course, sharing in the loot—British capitalism, for example. It was mainly in order to combat the growing influence of Russian imperialism in Manchuria that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was formed in 1902. And, ever since, the British and Japanese imperialisms have marched more or less hand in hand in Manchuria. The Japanese have, of course, taken by far the greater share of the loot, which is only to be expected since they have always been the open aggressors in the penetration of the country. But the British capitalists have always collected some very tasty pickings. And the United States have not been backward in

the scramble for the "land of opportunity." Japan finds in Manchuria a source of raw materials as well as a market for Japanese manufacturers. The other imperialisms, on the other hand, have been more interested in Manchuria as a market, primarily for their cotton goods, and then, as railways and industry developed, for steel rails, locomotives, machinery, etc., and we must not forget that unfailing source of dividends, the export of armaments. Munitions, weapons, war material—as, for instance, the equipment of Chang Tso-lin's huge arsenal in the city of Mukden—have all been poured into the country. In this respect all the imperialist Powers have made the most of their opportunities, with fine impartiality.

An idea of the effects of the imperialists' activity may be gathered from the fact that, in 1907, the trade of Manchuria represented six per cent. of the total trade of China. In 1929 Manchurian trade had grown to the proportion of twenty per cent. of the Chinese total. Meanwhile, changes were taking place in the relative positions of the imperialist Powers. As I have already said, cotton goods—the clothing of the Chinese worker and peasant—are by far the most important item in Manchuria's imports. Before the Russo-Japanese War, when Newchang was the only port in Manchuria open by treaty to foreign trade, the British cotton manufacturers had a virtual monopoly of the import trade. Later, however, by cheaper, mass-production, and by more efficient marketing methods, the American manufacturers gained the lead. Meanwhile, the Japanese were working hard to cheapen and increase their production of cotton goods. The child labour and virtual slavery on which their mills are run, unsurpassed even by the conditions in British Indian mills, and their advantages in the matter of transport, ultimately gave them the lead. The result is represented in figures as follows:—In 1929, cotton goods constituted 25 per cent. of the value of the total imports into Manchuria. And 60 per cent. of these cotton goods were of Japanese manufacture. Thirty-three per cent. are reported as from China, and probably a large proportion of these goods were from the Japanese mills in Shanghai. These figures show that in recent years Japan has forged steadily ahead in the race for advantages in the "land of opportunity."

Although its main importance to the capitalists, particularly Japanese, is as a source of raw materials, and a market for manufacturers, Manchuria has another advantage as a site for new industries favoured, as the Japanese themselves put it, by an "ample and cheap supply of labour." This does not, of course, imply that

the Japanese capitalists propose building up an independent Manchurian manufacturing industry. The types of factory which they are setting up mainly provide products which are useful to the factories of Japanese capitalism, e.g., iron from the Anshan iron-works, bean oil and fertiliser from the mills at Dairen, and so on. Much of the bean-cake and fertiliser is exported to European agricultural countries—Denmark, for example—and thus Japanese capital accumulates a surplus from Manchurian production which is all to the benefit of the Japanese imperialists and not at all to that of the Chinese peasant producers. And, of course, railway construction remains by far the biggest field for the investment of Japanese capital. Nevertheless, in the zone controlled by the South Manchuria Railway Company, the Japanese have already invested large amounts of capital in factory building. Cotton is, again, an important factor. The Chinese capitalists themselves awoke to the possibilities of manufacture, and, in 1921, founded a modern spinning mill in Mukden. It now has 25,000 spindles. But the Japanese answered this challenge by constructing three mills in the railway and consular zones. The Manchuria Cotton Spinning Company started with 31,360 spindles at Liaoyang in 1923, the Naikoi Cotton Company of Osaka opened a mill with 24,000 spindles at Chinchou in 1924, and the Fukushima Cotton Spinning Company, also of Osaka, opened a mill of 17,664 spindles in Dairen in 1925. The total annual production of these mills is equal to less than one-tenth of Manchuria's imports of cotton goods. Nevertheless, in this respect also, the Japanese have taken a firm grip and swamped the Chinese.

In the development of factories and industries in Manchuria the enterprise is practically exclusively in the hands of the Japanese. None of the other imperialist Powers control anything in this line worth mentioning. The growth of Japanese capitalist enterprise and investment is reflected (although not by any means completely recorded) by figures published by the Kwantung Government, showing the total of Japanese industries in the railway and consular zones as follows:—

Year.	Number of factories.	Capital invested (in yen).	Value of products (in yen).
1909 ...	152	16,132,101	6,138,792
1919 ...	450	123,571,509	242,882,798
1929 ...	789	302,080,061	126,915,076

(The yen equals 2s. [50c.] at par. At present it is worth about 1s. 8d.)

Japanese writers on the future of the country as a sphere of exploitation emphasise the importance of its unbounded supplies of "excellent labour of the sturdy coolie type."

"Chinese labour," says the South Manchuria Railway Company, in its "Report on Progress in Manchuria," "is one of the important factors in the industrial life of Manchuria." Even in the railway zone, the leased territory of Kwantung, and the consular districts, all of which are under direct Japanese jurisdiction, Chinese workers far outnumber the Japanese. Statistics from the source quoted above show that, in these districts, at the end of 1929, Chinese provided 93 per cent. of the farming labour, over 70 per cent. of the fishermen, 96 per cent. of the miners, and 88 per cent. of the factory workers.

The reason is not far to seek. It is provided by the same authority, which states that, "Even the ordinary Japanese labourer, though his efficiency may be 30-40 per cent. higher than the Chinese, is not able to compete with the Chinese owing to differences in standard of living, which is more expensive for Japanese." And again, the South Manchuria Company observes, "Chinese labour, owing to the lower standard of living, lesser efficiency and ample supply, receives less in wages than Japanese."

To put it more bluntly, but none the less truthfully, the Japanese capitalists find that they can squeeze out more profits by employing, at a starvation wage, the raw, untaught peasant from the Manchurian countryside, or the immigrant coolie from Shantung, rather than the more skilled Japanese worker, already trained in a capitalist factory system. In building up their industries in Manchuria, in fact, the Japanese are deliberately applying the experience gained in the cotton and silk mills of Shanghai, and in the British-Indian mills and ironworks.

By way of example, let us take the figures relating to the employees of the South Manchuria Railway. The railway employs 20,000 Japanese, including high officials, technicians, engineers, etc., 13,000 regular Chinese employees, and about 60,000 Chinese day-labourers. The total wages bill for the year ending March 31, 1930, was 28,800,000 yen (\$14,500,000). Of this total, 25 per cent. represents the wages paid to the Chinese. This gives an average wage for each of the 73,000 Chinese employees (permanent and day-labourers) of 98.6 yen a year, or about 1.9 yen a week. At the par of exchange this is equal to not quite 4s. (\$1) a week. Now compare the average wages of the Japanese staff.

The total wages paid to 20,000 Japanese was 21,600,000 yen. This gives an average of 1,080 yen each per year, or 20.8 yen a week. This is equal to an average wage of £3 os. 9d. (\$15) a week. Not a very high average, it is true. And the fact that the higher officials

receive much higher pay means that the average of the lower grade Japanese employees is much less than £3 a week.

But compare this, again, with the average for all the Chinese workers, of under 4s. a week, and note that the Japanese employee receives, on the average, more than ten times as much as the Chinese. Here again, the regular Chinese employees will receive a considerably higher rate; and this means that the average earnings of the coolie, who is paid by the day, will be infinitesimal—they can never reach the 4s. a week level. Evidently the Japanese imperialists have profited well by the example of the British in India, where the Indian railway worker is paid on a similar scale, while the European receives many times the Indian's rate, and by their American rivals' similar methods of differentiation between white and "native" labour in the Philippines, and between white and Negro at home.

The wage scale of the South Manchuria Company is based on a deliberately calculated policy. The East Asiatic Economic Investigation Bureau states it thus:—

"Although working hours are long and wages cheap, Chinese workers are able to live at small expense. An example of the average monthly living expenses of those employed in factories of the South Manchuria Railway Company and its associated organisations during 1925-1926 is given below."

	Single men.		Family of four.	
	Yen.	Per cent.	Yen.	Per cent.
Clothing ... ..	4.20	30	5.01	16
Food ... ..	6.60	46	15.55	50
Room or house rent ...	1.00	7	3.00	10
Lighting and heating ...	.30	2	3.10	10
Miscellaneous ... ..	2.10	15	4.28	14
Total ... ..	14.20	100	30.94	100

These, be it noted, are monthly rates. A single Chinese worker is calculated by his imperialist exploiters to require no more than 28s. 5d. (\$7.50) a month with which to satisfy all his needs. And, it should be explained, under the traditional Chinese family system, the single worker will have to contribute a large proportion of his earnings to his relatives. He would not have a large margin of his 28s. for cigarettes, drinks or the talkies, even if he got the whole sum. But the Japanese imperialists are just as ingenious at methods of stopping wages, making deductions, levying fines, and so on, as are their British tutors in India. And their own figures show that, in 1930, a very great proportion of their Chinese employees never got anywhere near the earnings calculated as their "average

monthly living expenses." For these figures show the average to have been not 28s., but 4s. a month.

At the Fushun coal mine, which is also operated by the South Manchuria Railway Company (see page 35), the wages of Chinese surface labourers in 1930 ranged from 30 to 50 Mexican cents a day. Underground workers, including skilled miners, received from 40 to 70 cents. According to the rates of exchange prevailing at the time, this is equivalent to a wage of 8d. to 1s. (.25c.) for a day of at least ten hours.

The same company owns and operates a large iron mine at Anshan. Here the surface labourers received, in 1930, from 30 to 37 Mexican cents a day, and the underground workers, including skilled miners, from 39 to 50 cents. That is, from about 6d. to 10d. (about .20c.) for a long day of heavy toil.

One final fact about this year 1930 reflects another essential characteristic of imperialist exploitation. The sum paid in dividends by the South Manchuria Company in this year was 30,000,000 yen. This is 1,200,000 yen more than the total wages bill for Japanese and Chinese employees. That represents a pretty powerful squeeze. And 1929-1930 was the period in which the economic crisis began to hit the South Manchuria Company severely. Since then the pressure of the crisis has become heavier, and, although the company has published no statistics, we may be sure that its efforts to find a way out have not taken the form of raising the wages of its Chinese employees!

Apart from the South Manchuria Company, the wages of Chinese workers in all towns in the Japanese controlled districts are not only appallingly small, but show a tremendous disparity with those paid to Japanese workers. Here are some figures, also obtained from a Japanese source, of wages paid in the city of Mukden in December, 1929. Unfortunately, no later investigation has been made:

Trade.		Japanese worker. Yen per day.	Chinese worker. Yen per day.
Carpenter	...	3.35	1.20
Joiner	...	3.35	1.30
Painter	...	3.00	1.00
Printer	...	2.50	1.05
Iron Worker	...	3.55	1.40
Shoemaker	...	2.10	1.10
Tailor	...	3.05	1.20

These are skilled trades. And the highest paid, ironworking

does not bring the Chinese worker more than 2s. 10d. (.75c.) a day. The Chinese printer must ply his craft—and for far longer than eight hours a day—for 2s. 10d., a sum which, even in these days of wage-cutting, would not keep many a London printer in beer and cigarettes. The wages of the Japanese workers, it will be noticed, are on the average between two and a half and three times greater than those paid to the Chinese.

I have already quoted the South Manchuria Company's own explanation of this disparity—that the Chinese worker has a lower standard, and his kind is more plentiful than the Japanese. On this point the East Asiatic Economic Bureau is equally frank. It says:

"As regards manual labour, the Chinese are certainly superior, because of the ability to do strenuous work on very simple fare, and their low wages rendered possible by this cheapness of living, and their docility in accepting longer working hours, making Chinese labour the most satisfactory and profitable in the world."

And the South Manchuria Company has kindly provided some statistics illustrating the Chinese workers' "docility in accepting longer working hours." These figures show the comparative working day of Chinese and Japanese in Manchurian factories as follows:—

Industry.	Chinese. Hours. Mins.		Japanese. Hours. Mins.	
Weaving and dyeing ...	13	40	10	53
Machinery and tools ...	10	45	9	35
Chemical ...	10	48	10	27
Foodstuffs ...	11	40	9	48
Miscellaneous ...	13	00	10	10
Special factories ...	—	—	9	10
Average ...	11	28	9	58

And the Economic Bureau comments:—

"As will be seen, Chinese work, on the average, an hour and a half longer than the Japanese; but, on the other hand, the efficiency of the Chinese is computed at about 60 or 70 per cent. of that of Japanese workers. But then, again, the wages of Chinese labourers are extremely low."

There is much meaning in that "then again." Low wages plus long hours plus low efficiency give more profits than higher wages plus shorter hours plus higher efficiency. So the Japanese capitalists have found the construction of factories in Manchuria a profitable enterprise.

I have several times quoted statements about the relatively lower



efficiency of the Chinese factory workers. That their efficiency is lower than that of the Japanese workers is an accepted fact. But what are the reasons? Is it because the Chinese are, in the nature of things, less intelligent and capable than the Japanese? No one who sees the two peoples together can maintain this. It is not superior brains which have made the Japanese the conquering, imperialist race in Manchuria. Is it because the Chinese are lazy? No, laziness is the last thing of which the Chinese can be accused. It is the misfortune of the Chinese workers and peasants, under the present conditions of capitalist exploitation, that they are capable of such endless, patient toil for such little return. But do not think for a moment that the Chinese workers like this state of affairs, or that they thrive on it. This is the philosophy of the imperialist exploiters—British, American, French, as well as the Japanese. If you comment on the low earnings, for example, of the 'rickshaw-coolies, the British, American or Japanese bourgeois replies: "Oh, they are all right if they get twenty cents a day. That's all they want." And if one of these bourgeois sees you overpaying a 'rickshaw-coolie or porter, he will say, "Here, you'll send him mad! He's never seen so much money in his life before." This is their way of justifying, or pretending to justify, the low wages they force the Chinese worker to accept. But of course the Chinese worker does not like small wages, wretched food, and long hours. He does not flourish on them. And it is in these conditions that you must seek the reason for the relatively low efficiency of the Chinese factory worker.

Iron foundries, for example, are places of heavy and exhausting toil. And the Chinese ironworker in Mukden has to endure this toil for ten or eleven hours a day, and receive at the end—two shillings and a few pence (.40 c.). If he were to spend the whole of that on food it would not be sufficient to maintain the physique demanded by such work. But there is always a family—father, mother, or relatives, if not wife and children—making claims on the Chinese worker's earnings. Here, then, is the reason for the lower efficiency—slow starvation. The Japanese capitalist squeezes out high profits by deliberately starving the Chinese worker, relying on the "abundant supply" of this labour, "the most satisfactory and profitable in the world."

If you were in the ports of Dairen, Antung or Yinkow during March you would be struck by the enormous number of Chinese arriving by boat from the south. They are obviously of the poorest class of workers. They are packed into almost every available foot of space on the lower decks of the passenger ships which

ply between Shanghai, Tsingtao, Tientsin and the Manchurian ports. Men, women and children, all are dressed in the cotton clothing characteristic of the coolie. Most have their clothing padded, for warmth, but very many are hatless, and have no other protection against the cold and wind. Each individual or family has a bundle, done up in cotton cloth, with a kettle and other utensils attached thereto. These are their worldly goods, and thus poorly equipped, they have travelled, packed together on the unsheltered decks, through the cold winds of the Yellow Sea. They stream off the boats and are marshalled in hundreds to the railway stations for transport to the interior.

These are an important part of the "ample supply" of "sturdy coolie labour" on which Japanese capitalism depends for its profits in Manchuria. They are migratory labourers from the provinces of Shantung and Hopei. Every year, after the New Year celebration, the northward trek of these thousands begins. By April they have dispersed far and wide over the plains of Manchuria, and have hired themselves, their wives and children, to work for the farmers until the end of the harvest, while others go to work as "free" labourers in the towns. By November the homeward trek begins, and they arrive back in their home provinces, in China proper, in time to celebrate the New Year with their families, according to Chinese custom.

For many years this ebb and flow of migratory labour into Manchuria has been a regular phenomenon. And the Japanese capitalists have not been slow to see the opportunities it offers, and to exploit them. The migrants are, as I have said, of the poorest type. Landless men, robbed even of their usual wretched living by civil war and the extortions of the feudal Chinese war-lords and great landowners, they are driven to seek bread elsewhere. In the fertile plains of Manchuria they find a refuge from absolute starvation. And they are welcomed by the Japanese capitalist as a reinforcement to the reserve of "docile and profitable labour."

In recent years the migratory movement has shown a marked tendency to develop into an immigrant traffic with the object of permanent settlement. This development has been carefully fostered by the Japanese. The Fushun Collieries of the South Manchuria Railway Company have established recruiting offices in Shantung and Shanhaikwan. The South Manchuria Railway transports the immigrants at reduced rates, 40 per cent. of the ordinary fares, and carries children under 15 and persons over 60 free. The results of this policy are seen in the fact that, while in 1925 the total of Chinese immigrants into Manchuria was 532,770,

in 1927 it had risen to 1,178,254, and in 1929 it was 1,046,271. At the same time, the number returning to their home provinces in the autumn fell to only 15 per cent. of the whole. Thus the Japanese capitalists have added very substantially, in the last six or seven years, to their reserve of cheap labour.

It is, moreover, not only as labour supply for factories and railway construction that the Japanese desire a plentiful supply of cheap labour. They have, in the past few years, by special arrangement with the Chinese Eastern Railway, conveyed considerable number of Chinese immigrants into the province of Heilungkiang, which stretches far to the north, from the Sungari River to the Amur, the frontier of the Soviet Union. In this province is some of the most fertile land, and in general best for farming, in the whole of Manchuria. And the Japanese capitalists have dreams of large-scale tractor-cultivation of the famous bean, and other valuable products. But, at present, the population of the province is far too sparse. The Japanese themselves estimate the inhabitants of Heilungkiang at only nine to the square kilometre, while those of Liaoning Province, which includes the South Manchuria Railway zone and most of the main factory centres, excepting Harbin, are estimated at 81 to the square kilometre. The penetration and exploitation of Heilungkiang demands also an ample supply of "docile and profitable labour."

These few facts regarding the Japanese policy of immigration and labour supply would be incomplete without a reference to the settling of Koreans in Manchuria. During the last ten years the Japanese have transplanted over one million of the peasants of their colonial possession into Manchuria. More than half of them are occupied in rice cultivation in the province of Kirin. But throughout Liaoning, also, the characteristic white costumes of the Koreans are frequently to be seen. Not only is their labour valuable to the Japanese capitalists, but their presence is frequently useful for political purposes. The "protection of their interests" serves as the pretext for military action. And, during the present tour of the League of Nations Commission, a delegation of Korean peasants is rounded up and trotted forward by the Japanese in every centre, to tell the Commissioners how cruel were the sufferings of the Korean settlers under the Chinese regime, and how free and happy is their lot in the "new era" of Manchukuo.

The fact that the Korean immigrants are largely engaged in cultivating rice does not mean, by the way, that they are eating rice. Rice, to us westerners, is understood to be the typical and staple food of the coolie. But in Manchuria its consumption is limited

to the Japanese and upper-class Chinese. The Chinese coolie eats an inferior form of grain called Kaoliang (a kind of millet), which has the advantage that it can be fed both to coolies and cattle, while its stalks make the peasant's fire or thatch his mud-walled house. And the Korean peasant has to hand over his rice to his Japanese master, and himself eats millet. It is an interesting example of the ways of the imperialist races that Korea, which produces high-grade rice, exports practically the whole of it to Japan, and imports for its own peasant population either Manchurian millet or low-grade rice from Indo-China.

An ample labour supply, low wages, long hours, the minimum quantity of food, of the lowest quality, these are the main features of the policy of the Japanese imperialists towards the Manchurian workers—exactly that policy, in fact, which accompanies British imperialist exploitation in India. But, you will say, it is evident that there is already in Manchuria the beginning of a working class. Is there no sign of revolt and struggle against these terrible conditions? Yes, there is, and I will describe the forces of revolt in a later chapter.



## CHAPTER IV

## RAILWAYS AND WAR

IF you look at the map of China you will see that the physical, as well as the political, boundaries between Manchuria and China proper are fairly distinct. Although 90 per cent. of the population of thirty million is now Chinese, and the Manchus and Mongols together form considerably less than the remaining 10 per cent., this state of affairs has only been achieved by the slow migration northward, during centuries, of the Chinese. The course of the Chinese immigration is naturally up the valley of the River Liaoh, which flows into the Gulf of Pechihli, and so over the central plains of the territory. Many of the Chinese immigrants first entered Manchuria by sailing their junks up the Liaoh. And consequently the population is much denser, and the agricultural developments more widespread and of older standing in this region, than in the northern and eastern parts of the territory. The natural distinctness of Manchuria from China proper is artificially emphasised by the Great Wall, touching the Gulf of Pechihli at Shanhaikwan, and by the political boundary of Mongolia. Together, these frontiers reduce the western section of Manchuria, joining China proper, to a narrow strip running along the Gulf of Pechihli to the Great Wall. The distinctiveness of Manchuria is further emphasised by the Nanking Government's practice of referring to the territory as the "Three Eastern Provinces"—Heilungkiang, Kirin and Fengtien (or Liaoning). The province of Jehol (or Chengtieh) has hitherto been regarded as rather Mongolian than Manchurian, but Japan's "new State" of Manchukuo claims jurisdiction over this territory, as well as over the three eastern provinces. Probably, from the point of view of its population, Jehol is predominantly Mongolian. But its boundaries are ill-defined and purely political, and there is no doubt that, in pursuit of its avowed end of penetrating Mongolia, as well as Manchuria, Japanese imperialism will have no hesitation not only in breaking down the old western frontiers of Manchuria, but in pushing the boundaries of Manchukuo "wider still and wider" westward.

I have dwelt upon the physical distinctness of Manchuria from China proper because this fact has undoubtedly aided the penetra-

tion of the land by Japanese imperialism, and its political separation from Chinese rule. Here we have a territory of about 382,000 square miles, three times the size of Japan. Its central plains are broad, flat and very fertile. They are surrounded on the north-west, north, east and south-east by mountainous forest belts. The mineral riches of the eastern and south-eastern mountains are already fairly fully explored. Those which are already being mined, by Japanese capitalists, include coal, iron, lead, copper, magnesite, dolomite, limestone, fire-clay, quartzite, silica, calcite, steatite, asbestos and marbles and lithographic stones. Almost the only mineral which is worked in the north (in the Sungari River) is gold—estimated production being about £1,000,000 a year. But this does not mean that the mountains of the north contain no other minerals. It is merely because the Great and Little Khingan ranges, and the lesser hills flanking the Soviet frontiers, have not yet been prospected.

These mountains are, as I have said, clad with forests. Indeed, Manchuria's forests cover nearly 89,000,000 acres—more than 31 per cent. of its total area. They are estimated to contain 150 billion cubic feet of timber, of which from 40 to 60 per cent. is Korean pine or other coniferous species, of good quality for building. Over 38 per cent. of this total grows on the Great Khingan Range, which runs up through the western portion of Heilungkiang to the Amur River, the Soviet frontier. The forest wealth of Manchuria is thus enormous, but most of it is remote from the main routes of transport at present existing.

This brings us to the main subject of this chapter. Here is a land which has proved peculiarly favourable for penetration by Japanese imperialism, and for separation from China. But its relative seclusion raises one serious problem—that of transport. The old Manchuria was singularly lacking in any natural means of communication.

The Sungari is the only important navigable river—and it is frozen for nearly half the year. There are no canals. And there are no roads fit for heavy motor traffic. The ancient means of transport—the primitive Chinese two-wheeled cart, drawn by the small, hardy Manchurian pony, and the camel—are inadequate both for the needs of the industrial system which Japanese capitalism is developing, and for the military plans of the Japanese imperialists.

The Japanese imperialists are, therefore, now preparing for a rapid push forward with the plans of railway construction which they have long cherished, and which are of immense economic and

strategic importance. These plans are laid, not with a view to the exploitation of Manchuria alone, but also with an eye to the future penetration and conquest of Eastern Siberia.

Railway development has made astonishingly rapid strides in Manchuria, since the beginnings were made by Russian imperialism a quarter of a century ago. Indeed, while in China proper, only about 5,200 miles of track have been constructed since 1877, more than 3,700 miles have been laid in Manchuria since 1897. The dream of Tsarist imperialism was to win access to open water, to construct at Dairen a great port which would not freeze in the winter, and thus to secure an outlet in the east for Russian exports. Hence the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway, with its branch through Changchun and Mukden to Dairen and Port Arthur. Hence the Tsarist Russian military penetration of Manchuria, and the Russo-Japanese War of 1905. Having defeated the Russians, and seized the harbours at Port Arthur and Dairen, with the railway up to Changchun, the Japanese took up the tasks of imperialist exploitation. While the Japanese policy in Manchuria has developed steadily along the lines of imperialism, that of Russia has undergone a revolutionary change. After the Bolshevik revolution the Soviet Government pursued a policy of free and equal co-operation in China. The Bolsheviks renounced all claims to extra-territoriality. They reached agreement with the Chinese Government by which the Chinese Eastern Railway is jointly controlled, the interests of both participants, Russian and Chinese, being fully represented and respected. This may be justly called the policy of peace as opposed to that of aggression. The Japanese imperialists' object was the penetration of Manchuria in order to exploit its abundant raw materials, agricultural and mineral, which Japan lacks. The Japanese altered the gauge of the railway from the Russian broad gauge to the standard gauge so as to facilitate communication with China proper. They double-tracked the line, and built a branch from Mukden to the Port of Antung. The whole system was handed over to the South Manchuria Railway Company, a very remarkable concern. It was formed by Government Charter in 1907, the Japanese Government holding one-half of the capital. The other half is all in the hands of Japanese capitalists.

This company, besides owning the railway, harbours and shipping lines, operates the largest coal mines in Manchuria, at Fushun and Yentai. Fushun, near Mukden, is the largest "open cut" coal mine in the world. The deposit is enormous, being estimated at from 952,000,000 to 1,200,000,000 tons. The Japanese have

developed the pits on a large scale, and according to the most modern methods. They inaugurated a "ten-year plan" in 1919, raised the production from about 4,000,000 tons in that year to 7,032,100 in 1930, and announce that their "plan" for 1933 is 8,000,000 tons.

The coal mine at Fushun is overlaid with a deposit of oil shale, estimated to contain nearly five and a half million tons. Although of no great importance in relation to the world resources and supply of oil, this is a fact of great interest to Japan. The consumption of fuel oil in Japan exceeds one million tons per year. Of this, more than two-thirds are imported. In the contemplated war against the Soviet Union the consumption of oil would, of course, greatly increase. Japanese imperialism is therefore driven to push forward all efforts to develop oil resources within its own territory. Accordingly the South Manchuria Railway Company erected an oil-distillation plant at Fushun at a cost of nearly £1,000,000 (\$5,000,000) and began production at the beginning of 1930. The annual capacity of the plant is 75,000 tons of fuel oil and by-products: 18,000 tons of ammonium sulphate, 15,000 tons of crude paraffin. The crude paraffin is shipped to Tokuyama, Japan, for refinement, and the product thus obtained is estimated to reduce Japan's import of paraffin from 90 per cent. to 40 per cent. of the total consumption. The production of ammonium sulphate is, of course, of importance to the explosives industry.

For the further discovery and development of such resources the South Manchuria Railway Company maintains an elaborately equipped series of laboratories, and subsidises the Eastern Asia Economic Research Bureau. In fact, the only systematic information obtainable regarding South Manchuria comes through these Japanese imperialistic channels, and all statistics have to be read with knowledge that the chief purpose of their publication is to glorify and justify the activity of Japanese imperialism in Manchuria. With regard to the mining of other minerals, which I mentioned earlier in this chapter, practically all of it is carried on by the South Manchuria Railway Company, or by companies associated with it. And practically all of the products of these mines are transported over the lines of the company.

In the transport of agricultural produce also, the South Manchuria Railway takes the biggest share. In 1929 the export of the soya bean, Manchuria's most famous product, totalled 4,721,000 tons. Of this, over 41 per cent. went to Japan. And of this, again, the greater quantity passed over the S.M.R. and through the Japanese port of Dairen. In this year Dairen handled 66 per cent. of the

total export and import trade of Manchuria. The trade between Dairen and Japanese and Chinese ports is mainly in the hands of the Dairen Kisen Kaisha—the steamship company which is associated with the South Manchuria Company. The docks at Dairen are controlled by the South Manchuria Dock Company, again an offshoot of the S.M.R. Thus, this company, controlled by an imperialist Government, has a monopolistic grip over transport and mining from Changchun to Dairen.

Further, the electricity supply, tramways and gas supply in Dairen, Mukden, Antung and Changchun were originally directly controlled by the S.M.R., and are now in the hands of subsidiary companies. Telegraphs and telephones in the railway zone, from Dairen to Changchun, and in the other cities above mentioned, are also controlled by this combine.

The capital investment in this huge combine is naturally enormous. The company itself declared its investments in direct industrial and municipal undertakings, at March 31, 1930, to total 716,201,517 yen. This may be taken to equal at least £71,000,000 (\$355,000,000). In addition, securities of affiliated companies, loans and cash advanced to Chinese railways, were returned at nearly £32,000,000 (\$160,000,000). Further, we may add the paid-up capital of the Dairen Steamship Company, which is 13,750,000 yen, or £1,300,000 (\$6,500,000).

Here, then, at the centre, and in control of Manchurian railways and transport development, and with tremendous influence on industry, is a powerful combine, the policy of which is really directed by the Japanese imperialist Government. And it must be said that the South Manchuria Railway Company is in general a remarkable example of efficient capitalist organisation. Its iron-works at Anshan are as up-to-date as its coal mines. Its railway workshops at Shakako, near Dairen, are among the largest in the Far East. They can repair simultaneously 27 locomotives, 36 passenger cars, and 130 freight cars, while at the same time building new stock. The locomotives of the S.M.R. are big, powerful engines of American pattern. The cars are fine, American type vehicles. They run on a splendid smooth track of 100 lb. rails. And they run fast and punctual to the minute. The South Manchuria system presents a sharp contrast to that of the Chinese Eastern Railway, with its single track of 65 lb. rails, its old-fashioned locomotives and coaches, and their slow motion.

But the world crisis has got its grip on the South Manchuria Company, despite its thorough-going imperialist methods of energetic, ruthless exploitation. Of its ways of squeezing the stomachs

of the Chinese workers, I have already written in the previous chapter. From 1908 to 1929 the profits of the company showed an uninterruptedly rising curve. From three-quarters of a million sterling in 1908, it rose to over three and a half millions in 1919, and in 1929 it stood at seven and a half millions. (From \$3,750,000 to \$17,500,000 and \$37,500,000.) Thus, profits increased exactly tenfold in the course of twenty-one years. But in 1930 came a sharp fall. The net profit was returned at only about £5,800,000 (\$24,000,000). The figure for 1931 showed a loss of £340,000 (\$1,700,000). The total income was 51,081,000 yen, and the expenditure 54,482,000 yen. The railway transport section dropped about 10,000,000 yen, but, relatively, the Fushun coal mines were hardest hit. Their income dropped from 1,800,000 yen in the previous year to 16,000 yen in 1931-2. The fall in the market for soya beans was one of the main causes of the losses on railway transport—and since then, of course, the war. The coal business has been very heavily hit by the boycott of Japanese coal in China proper. Having cut wages drastically from top to bottom, the company is now seeking a loan—without much encouragement. The economic crisis has Manchuria, and the great Japanese imperialist railway and mining combine, in its grip. In this fact is to be found one of the causes for the Japanese military intervention of last autumn. In the effort to save the existing structure of capitalism in Manchuria from disaster, it is necessary to go forward and seize more of the resources of the country. In particular, it is necessary for the Japanese imperialists to press onward with their schemes of railway extension. The South Manchuria line needs feeders. It must be provided with new facilities to open up and tap the products of the north and west, to drain away the transport traffic from the Chinese Eastern Railway (and consequently from Vladivostok) and to divert it over Japanese lines and through Japanese ports on to Japanese ships. In this way a little more profit may be derived for Japanese capital. . . . And a base may be laid for further Japanese penetration, a field for further investment of Japanese capital.

A study of the map\* of the Manchurian railways will show the physical structure of the existing system and the significance of the future plans for its extension. Let us look first at the existing railways, which are shown by unbroken lines. Crossing the northern half of the country, from west to east, is the Chinese Eastern Railway (marked B). This railway is of the five-foot gauge used in Russia, as is also the southern branch running from Harbin to Changchun. This is the line of international communication

\* See end.

between Europe and the Far East. It is also the great artery along which flows the wool and other produce of Mongolia, the beans and other agricultural products of the Northern Manchurian plains, and the timber of the Eastern district to the Soviet port of Vladivostock.

The second main line, the South Manchuria Railway, from Changchun to Dairen, with branch to Antung, is marked A. This, and all the other lines in Manchuria, apart from the C.E.R., has the standard track of 4 feet 8½ inches. International communications are continued from Mukden by the Peiping Railway (a Chinese-built line with British capital) marked E. This line communicates with Tientsin, Peking and Nanking, but at present traffic is interrupted at Shanhaikwan.

Now look on the map, at those sections of line marked D, which link up the towns of Tsitsihar-Taonan-Chengchiatun-Ssuningkai; and further, Changchun-Kirin-Tunhua. A dotted line runs from Tunhua to Kainei just over the Korean frontier, and from there a railway already exists to the port of Seishin. This series of lines represents a new route which is designed to bring the products of North Manchuria to a Japanese seaport without using the Chinese Eastern line. Only about 50 miles of track remain to be laid between Tunhua and Kainei. The proposed track, shown by a dotted line between Chengchiatun and Changchun, will considerably shorten this route. The "draining" of the eastern section of the C.E.R. is proposed by lines connecting Tunhua and Kainei with Hailin. Further, the Tsiko Railway, a Chinese line, marked C, continues this system northward, through Tsitsihar as far as Noho, and is planned to extend to Heiho, on the Amur, right opposite the Soviet town of Blagoveschensk. Another extension of this system is planned, and has already been begun, linking Taonan with Manchouli, and so, again, bringing the standard gauge railway right up to the Soviet frontier. To continue our survey of the northern area, look at the Huhai Railway, a Chinese line marked C, running from Harbin to Hailun. This is to be extended to Kikoto, on the Amur, and is also to be linked with the Tsiko Railway. Now notice the dotted line starting from Kirin, crossing the Chinese Eastern Railway, and following the Sungari River to beyond its junction with the Amur. This represents another plan for a railway to end at Suiyuan, facing the Soviet town of Khabarovsk.

In the province of Jehol, to the south-west, and bordering on Mongolia, we see a proposal for a network of new lines, with Chihfeng as the centre, and connecting with the port of Hulutao, on the Gulf of Pechihli. It will also be noticed that it is planned to connect Hulutao with Tsitsihar and, ultimately, the far north, by

direct lines. The building of these lines, and the development of Hulutao, was originally a project launched by the Chinese Government, with the idea of competing with the Japanese railways and the port of Dairen. The Chinese activity was the subject of many protests by Japan that the Chinese Government was violating the agreements which Japanese imperialism had forced upon it. But Japanese imperialism has now cut the knot by its military occupation of the country and the setting up of its puppet "independent" State, and undoubtedly all future railway building will take place under direct Japanese control. As a matter of fact, even while it was protesting, Japanese imperialism was taking care to get a firm hold on the Chinese Government enterprises by advancing loans which it knew the Chinese could never repay. Thus it was providing itself with a pretext for the future seizure of these lines. Another glance at the map will show something of the extent of this manoeuvre.

The railways marked D are described as Chinese lines built with Japanese capital. They represent a considerable section of the recently constructed railways of Manchuria. Thus, of the 3,700 miles now in operation, China nominally owns no more than 1,800 miles. But of this mileage, 612 come within category "D," being built with Japanese capital. And the Japanese exercise a strong control over these lines. It is stipulated by contract that the chief engineers and business heads must be Japanese. Financially, also, the Japanese have a firm grip on the Chinese by reason of the fact that the latter are heavily in debt. To take some examples from among these lines:—On the Kirin-Changchun line, built in 1912, the Chinese Government still owes Japan 9,000,000 yen; on the Kirin-Tunhua section, built in 1928, the debt is 24,000,000 yen; on the Ssuningkai-Taonan line, built in 1923, China still owes 52,000,000 yen; and on the Taonan-Anganghsi section, completed in 1926, the debt is over 20,000,000 yen. And so we might go on, showing that in reality these lines are completely in the grip of the Japanese imperialists and moneylenders.

Their construction, and the plans for their extension, are the steel framework of a great scheme of imperialist expansion. Not only to provide for the investment of Japanese capital, to extract the natural riches and raw materials of Manchuria, and to open up a market for Japanese manufacturers, but to prepare the way for penetration of Eastern Siberia—this is the idea of the imperialist railway-builders. Note how their new construction, and their plans, lead up to the frontiers of the Soviet Union on the one hand, and down to exclusively Japanese ports on the other. The transport of

Manchurian produce to these ports is only one aspect of the utility of these lines. They are also strategic railways. While, on the one hand, they are designed to make the Chinese Eastern Railway economically obsolete, they are intended, on the other, to provide means for the transport of Japanese troops, independently of the Russian-gauge line, from Korean ports to the Soviet frontier. The Japanese railway plans in Manchuria are thus an essential part of the Japanese imperialists' preparations for a war of aggression and conquest against the Soviet Union.

## CHAPTER V

### PRESS AND PROPAGANDA.

THE preparations for a war do not involve only the piling up of armaments, the building of railways, nor even the dispatch of armies to the field of action. Attention must also be given to the minds of the people who are destined to serve the ends, and the profits of the warmakers. Fear and hatred of the prospective foe must be continually instilled. This is where the Press comes in.

In Manchuria the method is much the same as in all other parts of the world where imperialism pursues its warlike ends. The Japanese have, perhaps, a rather more than usually favourable position, since there is no opposition Press of any kind. It is not allowed. There is no revolutionary working-class publication. The surreptitious distribution of leaflets, in Chinese, takes place in Fuchiatien (the Chinese quarter of Harbin), in the Chinese sections of Changchun, Mukden, and elsewhere. This is an achievement in face of the summary methods of repression by the military dictators and their Chinese puppets in the "new State." But it does not compensate for the lack of a public Press organ of the revolutionary movement.

As for the existing newspapers, they are subjected to a close scrutiny by Japanese, or Japanese-controlled censors, in case they should show any tendency to slip off the prescribed line. Telegrams for the Press abroad, by the way, are also controlled by Japanese censors, who delete whatever they consider unsuitable, without, as a rule, consulting the sender. No foreign correspondent has any certainty that his message will reach his paper in the form in which he sent it. As an example of the care with which the Japanese exercise this control, I may mention that, when the League of Nations Commission visited Harbin, the Chinese censors at the radio station were replaced by Japanese, who controlled all Press wires.

Thus, then, the Press of Manchuria, Chinese and foreign, is under the absolute control of the Japanese imperialists and their agents. Apart from the Chinese, the bulk of the foreign-language Press is Russian. Harbin, with its seventy thousand Russians, has several

such papers. Their complexion is, of course, extremely white. Their speciality—alarming reports of alleged Bolshevik plots and activities—is served highly spiced. In addition to trying to make the readers' flesh creep, they back up the Japanese preparations for war by a continual reporting of anti-Soviet activity in Europe. Obviously this serves the purpose of raising the warlike spirits of the whites in Manchuria.

Harbin has another, and very interesting, type of Press organ. This is the "*Harbinskoye Vremya*," or "*Harbin Times*." It is also ostensibly a Russian paper, but was actually founded by the Japanese after their military advance into North Manchuria last autumn. It is edited by a Russian-speaking Japanese, and has a staff of Japanese, with only two White Russians. Its objects are frankly pro-Japanese and anti-Soviet propaganda. I will give some account of the views of Mr. Osawa, its editor, later.

In Dairen is published the "*Manchuria Daily News*," in English, or rather, in a quaint Japanese conception of the English language. On its front page it declares itself the "Only English Daily in South Manchuria" and "An Independent Daily, not the organ of any Institution." The only modifications required in this statement are, that the paper is not English, but is certainly independent of everything except Japanese finance and the Japanese official propagandists. From front page to back it is filled with Japanese propaganda admixed with reckless and highly slanderous attacks on the Soviet Union and its official representatives in Manchuria.

Thus, within Manchuria, the Japanese control of the Press is complete. I have already mentioned the censorship of telegrams for abroad. But, of course, with the exception of one or two Americans, none of the foreign correspondents of the capitalist Press have any inclination to criticise or oppose the Japanese policy. And the Americans' sullen hostility is not based on opposition to preparations for war against the Soviet Union, but on alarm at the rapidity with which Japan is closing the "open door" of trade in this "land of opportunity." The Japanese have a working arrangement with the great capitalist news agencies which enables them to use these agencies as world distributors of their propaganda. The United Press and the Associated Press of America and Reuter's all work in collaboration with the Japanese official agency, Shimbun Rengo. Only one agency stands outside this combination—International News, which is controlled by the Hearst newspaper combine in America.

By means of this arrangement, aided by the censorship, the Japanese can broadcast anti-Chinese and anti-Soviet propaganda

without fear of contradiction from any person on the spot in Manchuria. And the agency correspondents fulfil their tasks willingly. Reuter's representative in Harbin is the most enthusiastic purveyor of "Bolshevik plot" stories, which can easily be got from hard-up Whites for a consideration, or even a glass of vodka. As a matter of fact, this gentleman is notorious even among the bourgeois correspondents, who shake their heads and call his reports "scandalous"—not because these hard-boiled journalists can be shocked by lies, anti-Soviet or otherwise, but because they fear that his stories are so wild that no one will believe them.

I will quote only one specimen—an average one, not specially selected—of the Reuter representative's handiwork. This is a telegram which he broadcast to the world on the occasion of the May Day celebration:—

"Harbin, May 2.—A number of Russian Communist youths who were pretending to offer prayers in the Cathedral early yesterday morning aroused the suspicions of the janitor, who examined them and found they were carrying explosives, apparently with the intention of blowing up the building."

Need it be said that the police, in reply to enquiries, said that they had never heard of the matter; that the bold janitor who tackled the desperadoes single-handed was afterwards remarkably retiring—in fact, neither he nor his haul of explosives had been heard of at the cathedral; and that no one, apart from Reuter's correspondent, even knew that "a number of Russian Communist youths" was abroad in the town?

But the Japanese imperialists do not rely solely on such products of the fumes of vodka. Among the special correspondents of newspapers, they are well provided with skilful agents—particularly among the British. I need hardly remind British readers that, despite some mild protests against the killing of babies at Shanghai, the whole British capitalist Press has consistently supported Japanese imperialist policy in Manchuria. As an example, I may tell the story of the correspondent of London's most notorious "yellow" daily, who, when the Japanese advance began in the autumn of 1931, hurried north from Peking. He began telegraphing freely accounts of events, but, evidently, it was felt by his editor that some of his statements did not reflect that glory on the Japanese which was desired. For he received a sharp wire from London saying, "Remember we support islanders." Foreign correspondents in Manchuria still recall this incident and declare it "a bit thick," not because they object to "supporting islanders," but because, as one of them said, "It's damned silly to say that in an open wire,



which everyone can understand." In other words, how can you go on trying to gull the Chinese with a pretence of impartiality when they know your editor has wired you to "support islanders"?

But the Japanese are not content with such "independent" support. After all, some conflict of interests might arise which might force the British Press to hostile criticism. So the Japanese also have their own agents among the foreign correspondents. Such a one is the correspondent of a leading London organ of the Conservative Party. This gentleman, who recently removed from Peking to a very fine residence in Mukden, is well known to every correspondent in Manchuria as a Japanese agent. He is one of the leading propagandists of the "new State" of Manchukuo. Every day, under a pseudonym, he fills two columns of the "Manchuria Daily News" with the frankest Japanese propaganda. In private he does not conceal the fact of his authorship. And, every day, his "news" appears in one of the most important political organs in London.

"News," as far as these correspondents are concerned, is derived almost exclusively from daily conferences with officers of the Japanese military intelligence—engaging gentlemen, accomplished in shaking dice and drinking whisky and soda, and charming hosts at the little dinners at which, assisted by selected geishas, they now and then entertain the correspondents. And they are quite skilful, too, in handing out the "dope" and evading awkward questions.

I have described enough to show that, in the manipulation and corruption of the Press, the Japanese have nothing to learn from the older imperialisms. I shall try now to give some idea of the nature of their propaganda in preparation for war on the Soviet Union.

If you were to accept at their face value the statements of Japanese Ministers regarding relations with the Soviet Union, you might go to sleep with the comfortable assurance that the future of the Far East was nothing less than a new heaven of sweetness, light and fraternity. That is, of course, exactly the effect which these declarations are intended to produce. Even the fire-eating War Minister, Araki, idol of the Fascist youth, feels it politic occasionally to announce that relations between Japan and the U.S.S.R. are steadily improving. But, fortunately, these little hypocrisies are no less transparent than the Japanese imperialists' other efforts at pretence. The polite smiles of the Japanese towards the Soviet Union are those of the assassin fondling the knife with which he contemplates murder.

If you think these remarks unjustified, consider some of the statements in the Manchurian Press. But first let me tell you of the private views of Mr. Osawa, the Japanese publicist, who has been entrusted with the control of the Russian anti-Soviet newspaper "*Harbin Times*." I was politely invited by Mr. Osawa to meet him, and be informed on Japan's policy in the "new State" of Manchukuo. And here is the essential point of his explanations:

"If," he said, "you wish to understand the reasons for Japan's action in Manchuria, you must seek it, not in any Chinese anti-foreign policy, nor in the disputes with the Changs, the former rulers of Manchuria, but in the growing power of the Soviet Union. This is the reason for Japan's intervention in Manchuria."

"Since 1929, when the Soviet forces defeated the Chinese on the Chinese Eastern Railway," continued Mr. Osawa, "the prestige and influence of the Soviets in this country has been increasing alarmingly. Both by political intrigue and by their trading methods they constitute a growing menace to all foreign countries which have interests here. The action of Japan, in intervening to combat the Soviet menace, is therefore taken in the interests of all countries."

I thought of the complaints of some of my American trading acquaintances, regarding the impossibility of opening up any business in competition with the Japanese. I remembered how I had seen a Japanese in a Chinese store, being offered an American electric lamp, smash it, and say, "You sell Japanese lamps!" I recalled how I had just been told by the representative of a big British concern, which offered to tender for the new Harbin electric power station, that the Chinese authorities had told him that they were under compulsion to accept none but Japanese tenders. And I enjoyed a mental smile at Mr. Osawa's concern for "the interests of all countries." But I was much obliged to Mr. Osawa for his frank declaration of the real reason for Japan's intervention. I asked him if he could tell me something of the methods used by the Bolsheviks.

"That is more difficult," he said cautiously. "The Bolsheviks are very clever. They used to send quite undisguised agitators here, but now they have withdrawn these and replaced them by men of a different type. These are apparently commercial representatives and officials, who secretly organise political agitation." And Mr. Osawa went on to mention certain Soviet officials in Harbin who, he declared, were secret political agents.

It will thus be seen that the Japanese method of anti-Soviet agitation is in the time-honoured tradition of Joynson-Hicks, and that

they have taken a leaf out of the book of their American rivals by using the same sort of accusation as was directed against the officials of Amtorg, the Soviet trading organisation in the United States.

Mr. Osawa's task in conducting his anti-Soviet journal in the Russian language in Harbin is to keep the Whites in the desired state of inflammation, and to direct their hatred of the Soviets in the interests of the Japanese imperialists. The Whites in Manchuria, as in France and the Balkans, have no power of their own. They are dependent on the cash and control of the imperialist Powers who make them their tools. The main purpose for which the Japanese, in the present stage of their campaign, find the Whites useful is in the matter of provocation. Not only the manufacture of "Red Plot" stories and their dissemination through the White Press and the capitalist news agencies, but the actual staging of "plots" is among the tasks of the Whites. Of this order are the various train-wrecking attempts on the Chinese Eastern Railway, and the alleged plot to blow up the second Sungari bridge, in consequence of which over one hundred Soviet citizens are (at the moment of writing, June, 1932) held in prison at Harbin, without trial.

These "plots" provide the Japanese-controlled Press with plentiful material for anti-Soviet "revelations." And the language of their articles makes the peaceful declarations of the Japanese Ministers, to which I have referred, look decidedly queer. For example, the alleged train- and bridge-wrecking plots were made the pretext for an "enquiry" into "Soviet Communist" organisations in North Manchuria. The report was broadcast in the Manchurian Press. It consists mainly of alleged "depositions" by prisoners. It is an undisputed fact that arrested persons have been chained and tortured in the prison at Harbin, and they are allowed no visitors. But it is incredible that any of the concoctions here reported can have been made by any genuine Communist, under whatever duress. If we look for their origin among the White agents we shall not go far wrong. Anyhow, to quote from the report. It is issued from the "Intelligence Office, Council Board, Manchukuo Government, Changchun." I quote from the Japanese translation into English, published in the "*Manchuria Daily News*." The language is, therefore, occasionally a trifle strange.

"Proof has been forthcoming," the report declares, "indicative of the directing hands of the Soviet North Manchuria Communists and the North Manchuria Young Communists, having about 3,700-3,800 members about Harbin, in the frequent 'Red' terrorist antics played in North Manchuria, with the object of disturbing North Manchuria

before order is forged out of the chaos under the new Manchukuo reign, at the same time hindering the movements of the Japanese troops."

The report goes on to describe the train-wrecking and Sungari bridge "plots" as the working of "fighting volunteers" organised by these "Soviet Communists." It continues:—

"The Soviet Communists Committee is conspiring to disturb the peace in North Manchuria by making use of all anti-Japanese or anti-Manchukuo organisations," and further:

"Simultaneously with the mobilisation of the Chinese Communists, the Third International, Moscow, instigated the Korean 'Reds' to plot the blow-up of a railway in North Kankyo District, Chosen. Two Koreans, implicated, with about a dozen suspects, were rounded up by the Seishin policemen before the plot was put into execution. . . . The men, sent on the errand to blow up North Korean railways, had sailed south from Siberian littorals on April 15th, and landed on the coasts of Dokusei, seven miles south of Seishin, where they had discharged four packages of explosives and 17 revolvers."

The report goes on to announce that the "North Manchuria Communists Committee" "works under the directions of the Central Committee (Moscow) and the Far Eastern Committee (Harbin)." It proceeds with the following interesting information:

"To 'redden' a foreign country is in principle left to the native 'reds' of that particular locality, but, in view of the peculiar position North Manchuria occupies it is kept under the direct control of the Soviet Communists. . . ."

Having published a long list of the names of Soviet citizens, officials of the Chinese Eastern Railway, who are said to be secret leaders of this "reddening" campaign, the report continues:—

"Necessary funds were supplied by the Mopple (sic) (International Relief Society) . . . Any deficit was made by the Communists Committee and the Soviet Consulate-General, Harbin."

These funds were placed at the disposal of the "volunteer corps" for blasting and train-wrecking purposes, the report says:—

"Twenty brightest men were selected from among the raw recruits of 1930, and sent to Habarovsk to undergo a course of training under Karpoff, of the Far Eastern Red Guard Headquarters, in order to be qualified for the Corps leaders. At the Soviet naval base in the suburbs of Habarovsk, since January, 1930, these students received practical instructions in blowing up and other destructive operations, chemical experiments and political training; special importance being attached to blowing-up contrivances. A specialist from the Soviet squadron officiated as instructor in technical matters. . . ."



I have quoted enough to show that, while Japanese Ministers are protesting their friendly intentions towards the Soviet Union, Japanese organs in Manchuria are publishing accusations of the gravest sort against Soviet civil and military officials. A strange way of improving relations!

If any of these accusations were true, or honestly believed by the Japanese Government, we should before this, have seen a very severe crisis in Soviet-Japanese relations, and probably a conflict. But they are not seriously believed by the Japanese authorities who cause their publication. Only they serve to inflame the minds of the population against the U.S.S.R. and to give a pretext for arresting a few more Soviet citizens. And thus they play their part in Japan's steady, deliberate preparation for war.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FORCES OF REVOLT

MANCHURIA is in a state of war. It is war of a peculiar, elusive nature. On the surface, in the big towns, and in the villages in their neighbourhood, life seems to be pursuing a more or less normal course. The crowded streets, the buying and selling, the work of the big factories and the innumerable handicrafts which the Chinese ply in their little workshops, might give the impression that nothing very fundamental had occurred to disturb the daily occupations of the people. Even in the fields the peasants seem to be as busy as usual with their spring ploughing and sowing. Where, then, is the evidence of war?

In previous chapters I have given some sketches of the Japanese military occupation, of the setting out of the expedition from Harbin, down the Sungari river; of the movement of troops along the Chinese Eastern Railway and the Changchun-Kirin line; of the drive towards the frontiers of the Soviet Union; and I have observed several times that the Japanese imperialists have pressed this movement forward under the pretext of suppressing "bandits." But it would be wrong to leave the impression that the "bandits" are nothing but a pretext. The existence of these irregular bands is, at present, the only expression of the Chinese people's resistance to Japanese imperialist aggression. And it is, at the same time, utilised by the Japanese as cover for an increasing military occupation, and for the disposal of their forces with a view to the necessities of the coming attack on the Soviet territory of Eastern Siberia.

What is the nature of the "bandit" forces? The Japanese imperialists, of course, attach this label to all the Chinese who resist their aggression by force of arms. They draw pictures of peaceful villages and defenceless railway posts threatened by sudden raids for the purposes of murder and robbery. This provides the Japanese with "moral" justification, in the eyes of the bourgeois world, not only for their "punitive expeditions," but for the slaughter of any Chinese peasants found bearing arms. But, in providing themselves with this justification, the Japanese imperialists much misuse

the English word "bandit," not to mention its Chinese equivalent. Banditry, meaning robbery by armed bands, has naturally existed since the earliest times in such a country as Manchuria, with its great uncultivated spaces, and its frequent use as a battlefield. The Manchurian name for bandits is "Hunghudze," which means "red beards," and is said to originate from the bands of bearded Russian marauders who raided the country in the eighteenth century.

But nowadays the Japanese imperialists declare all their Chinese opponents to be of this kidney. Thus, when, as not infrequently happens, a body of troops of the new Manchukuo Government revolts, and joins the fight against the Japanese, the latter report that these soldiers have "gone Hunghudze." For instance, a correspondent in Harbin one day informed me, "The new Kirins (the newly recruited Manchukuo army in the province of Kirin are popularly called "new Kirins") in Old Harbin have gone Hunghudze, and the Japanese are disarming them." In general, then, the term "bandit," or "Hunghudze," may be taken to include all who are engaged in armed struggle against the new puppet State and its Japanese imperialist lords.

What is the nature and number of the forces fighting the Japanese? This is a difficult question, and one to which I can give only an incomplete answer. But it will serve to show something of the scope of the struggle. To begin with the province of Kirin, through which runs the eastern section of the Chinese Eastern Railway, from Harbin to Vladivostock. Here is a considerable body of forces cocommonly referred to as "old Kirins," that is, soldiers of the old army of the province before their supersession by the new army of Manchukuo. They carry on guerilla warfare, in an apparently rather erratic and spasmodic way, on the eastern section of the C.E.R., and the Changchun-Kirin-Tunhua railway, and in the forested hinterland, where they have strong retreats. Against them the Japanese are employing the Tamon Division, on the Changchun-Kirin line, and Hirose's (10th) Division operating from Harbin down the Sungari and along the C.E.R. eastern section. The Japanese military intelligence puts the number of forces opposing Hirose's advance at five to six thousand, under three leaders. It states that the present centre of the resistance is Mulang, on the north bank of the Sungari, in Heilungkiang. Another 3,000, the Japanese estimate, are centred at Tunping, northwest from Imienpo, on the C.E.R. eastern section, with 2,000 more farther west.

Let us take next the province of Heilungkiang, occupying

practically the whole north of Manchuria. In this province the notorious military adventurer, General Ma Chan-shan, at present finds a centre for his activities. As to the nature of these activities there is much of speculation and rumour, and little of ascertained fact. Ma, it will be remembered, commanded the Manchurian forces which opposed the Japanese advance into North Manchuria in the autumn of 1931. Later he changed sides, and accepted a post in the new puppet Government of Manchukuo. Whether the "squeeze" to be derived from this office proved unsatisfactory, or whether his former chief, Chang Hsueh-liang, now in Peking, offered him superior inducements, is not clear; but, anyhow, last March, Ma again changed fronts, retreated to the far north, and declared his renewed opposition to the Japanese occupation. This manœuvre looked suspiciously like an attempt to embroil the Soviet Union in conflict with Japan, and many observers here set it down as an act of provocation. In any case the firm policy of the Soviet Union frustrated any such trick, Ma failed to create the desired impression that he was backed by Soviet support, and since then his position has been obscure.

The Japanese declare that Ma Chan-shan is in secret communication with the former Manchurian war-lord, Chang Hsueh-liang, in Peking, who directs his line and provides him with funds. Incidentally, they also charge Wellington Koo, the Chinese assessor to the League of Nations Commission, with being in touch, by secret agents, with Ma. Some reports allege that Ma has large funds, others discredit this. Rumour says that he has British-built aeroplanes, but, if so, he certainly does not use them against the Japanese. And two adventurous young British airmen, who were in Harbin in the spring of 1932, admittedly ready to do a deal with anyone who would pay hard cash for aeroplanes, scout the idea that Ma has any air force.

However, Ma is at present in the region of Tsitsihar, and is in command of a force which touches the western section of the Chinese Eastern Railway, between Harbin and Anganghsi, the junction for Tsitsihar. On a visit to this section of the line, at the end of May, I observed Ma's men in occupation of some villages and small stations. And the eastward-bound Trans-Siberian express was held up for seven hours at a point some twenty miles west of Harbin, while Japanese troops were reported to be clearing the line.

No fighting, however, appeared to take place. Meanwhile, a Japanese mixed brigade (infantry, artillery, etc.) is at Tsitsihar, under the command of General Amamo. And the railway from Anganghsi to Manchouli, on the Soviet frontier, is occupied by

Manchukuo troops. These facts point to the conclusion that Ma is not seriously opposing the Japanese, but that the presence of his troops on or near the railway is to be used by the Japanese as a pretext for occupation of the western section of the Chinese Eastern Railway, in like manner to that in which the eastern section is occupied.

The Japanese military intelligence declares the number of anti-Manchukuo forces in the region west of Harbin and north of the railway to be 8,000. That there are, in fact, considerable and active guerilla forces in this neighbourhood is proved by the attack on the Japanese troops at Sungpuchen, on the north bank of the Sungari, and within sight of the Harbin landing-place whence the Japanese dispatched their big expedition down the river. This daring attack began on May 17, and continued for some days, forcing the Japanese to send reinforcements across the river. Reinforcements have also been sent to the Nakamura Brigade, a part of the Sungari expedition, with the object of "clearing up" the region lying to the north of Harbin.

As to the other provinces over which Manchukuo (or thinly-disguised Japanese imperialism) claims jurisdiction, Liaoning is the seat of the South Manchuria Railway zone, of the important Japanese coal mines of Fushun and iron mines and smelting works of Anshan, and the big Japanese business centre and settlement at Mukden. Naturally, this region is heavily guarded, and guerilla tactics in the open, mostly treeless country are difficult. In that portion of the province, however, which runs along the Yalu River, forming the Korean frontier, anti-Japanese forces take advantage of the forest and hill-country, and reports of activity are occasionally published. And in the western strip of the province, running down the Gulf of Pechihli to Shanhaikwan, and traversed by the Peking-Mukden Railway, anti-Japanese forces exist to considerable extent. These are undoubtedly partially supported by Chang Hsueh-liang, from Peking. Here the Japanese have concentrated a whole division—the 8th—under General Mori.

To sum up the information provided by Japanese military intelligence; they declare the number of "bandits" (that is, anti-Japanese forces) in Manchuria to range between forty and fifty thousand. The two main organisations are, they state, the Army of National Salvation, estimated at 30,000 men, and the Big Swords, estimated at 3,000. Guerilla bands, acting in co-operation with these organisations, are reckoned at about 12,000 strong.

The Japanese declare that the mass of these forces is located round the eastern section of the Chinese Eastern Railway. This, as I have remarked before, is the Japanese imperialists' pretext for the heavy military occupation of this section of railway, and for the Sungari expedition. But, as observers here frequently remark, it is a peculiar fact that the Japanese invariably seem to find concentrations of "bandits," and to encounter raiders, in just those positions which it is strategically useful for the Japanese to occupy. Regarding the eastern section of the C.E.R., the Japanese declared that they had received requests for help against "bandits" from villages along this line. But these statements are not supported by observers on the spot. For instance, an American missionary, arriving in Harbin from this region, was asked if it were true that the Chinese had asked the Japanese for help. He replied that he had heard of no such instance, and he considered it inconceivable that the Chinese villagers should appeal to the Japanese. As to the possibility of an appeal coming from Russian inhabitants, he did not believe the Russians would dare to do so in face of the hostility of the Chinese.

Briefly, then, it is pretty clear that a great many of the reports, from Japanese sources, of "bandit raids" in this region are designed as cover for the continual movement of large masses of troops into strategic positions in relation to the Soviet frontier. Further, it is more than probable that some of the "bandit" leaders in this region are Japanese agents, employed to provoke conflict in order to give the pretext for a further Japanese advance. This method has, in the past, been employed by the Japanese, and other imperialist Powers, in their manoeuvres in China proper.

Nevertheless, the existence of a strong movement of resistance to the Japanese occupation is evident throughout Manchuria. In every village, in almost every Chinese peasant's house, there is a deep hatred of the Japanese imperialists. Give a Chinese peasant a rifle, and you may be sure he will use it, when opportunity offers, against the Japanese. Indeed, there is no doubt that some of these peasants, whom you see innocently tilling their fields by day, take a hand by night in the raids on Japanese railway posts, in the cutting of telegraph wires, and so on. The spirit of resistance is not, indeed, limited to the peasantry. I have referred to Japanese reports that Manchukuo soldiers have "gone Hungtudze." Such incidents are not infrequent. And the Japanese imperialists do not place over-much reliance on the newly-raised army of the "new State" of Manchukuo. These troops do not hold any important positions.

They are not fully equipped, nor capable of acting independently as an army. Aeroplanes, tanks, artillery, etc., are all in the hands of the Japanese. For the imperialist invaders are continually menaced, despite all their propaganda as well as armed force, with the prospect of widespread revolt among the Chinese troops.

The resistance to the Japanese occupation may be summed up, then, as widespread but disorganised. It is a war in which the imperialist has all the advantages of finance, technical equipment and highly trained and experienced leadership; while the Chinese peasants and workers have to fight also poverty and even starvation, as well as the lack of experienced and trustworthy leaders. It would appear to be a desperate, even hopeless, struggle, but there are some powerful forces on the side of the Chinese in the shape of objective conditions.

There are the great areas of the north and west, stretching away into the Mongolian steppes, inaccessible by railway and road. There are the mountain and forest regions, adjoining the northern, eastern and Korean frontiers. Here are bases for indefinitely prolonged resistance to the Japanese occupation and for guerilla raids on the imperialist armies.

But Manchuria can never be freed from imperialist domination by peasant revolts and guerilla warfare alone. Only a revolutionary uprising of the whole of the exploited Chinese masses can throw off the yoke and clear the path to liberation. And this uprising must be led by the workers, by leaders already experienced and disciplined by fighting against capitalist exploitation in the factories. Such a leadership alone can unite peasant and coolie in a struggle with the conscious aim of the overthrow of imperialism. Does Manchuria contain such a revolutionary force, or the possibilities of its development? In an earlier chapter I have shown that there is a considerable factory working class in the towns of the Japanese-controlled zones in the south. And, giving figures to show the terrible character of the exploitation of these Chinese workers, I asked the question, "Is there no sign of revolt and struggle against these terrible conditions?"

There is, indeed, evidence that the Chinese workers are fortunately not so docile in accepting low wages and long working hours as the Japanese capitalists declare. There is already a history of struggle behind the exploited masses of Manchuria. The story can be told in statistics, although it is unfortunate that none later than

1928 are available. But take the record of strikes shown in the following table:—

*Strikes in Manchuria, 1916-1928.*

Year	No. of Strikes		Workers Striking	Average of Strikers per Strike	No. of Days	Average days per Strike
1916	...	5	1,290	258	15	3.0
1917	...	5	1,019	204	7	1.4
1918	...	20	5,975	299	55	2.8
1919	...	55	11,336	206	175	3.1
1920	...	18	3,694	205	280	15.6
1921	...	7	959	137	12	1.7
1922	...	25	4,021	161	93	3.7
1923	...	27	4,177	155	80	3.0
1924	...	29	5,256	181	128	4.4
1925	...	59	8,889	151	225	3.8
1926	...	67	12,642	226	325	5.8
1927	...	94	23,539	250	383	4.0
1928	...	81	17,845	220	376	4.4

The statistical analyses of causes of the strikes and their results are interesting. I give them, as furnished by the "China Year Book," from 1922 onwards:—

*Strikes in Manchuria, 1922-1928, analysed According to Causes.*

Year	Percentage of Strikes for in- creased wages	Percentage Against Wage-cuts	Percentage Against Bad Conditions	Percentage due to "strain- ed relations"	Percentage due to other causes
1922 ...	32	8	16	20	24
1923 ...	37	15	30	3	15
1924 ...	48	3	34	—	14
1925 ...	49	5	20	14	12
1926 ...	67	2	18	10	3
1927 ...	60	5	10	18	7
1928 ...	56	8	16	10	10

*Results of Strikes, 1922-1928, in Percentages.*

Year			Strikers Terms Accepted	Strikers' Terms Rejected	Compromise	Results Indefinite or unknown
1922	...	...	20	48	32	—
1923	...	...	4	52	37	7
1924	...	...	17	48	35	—
1925	...	...	18	41	35	5
1926	...	...	18	24	57	1
1927	...	...	14	29	57	—
1928	...	...	11	33	45	11

Of the 81 strikes occurring in 1928, the Japanese authorities admit that 41, involving over 9,000 workers, Chinese and Japanese, occurred in Japanese factories in the railway zone, leased territory and consular districts. The percentage of strikes won by the workers

is not high, but it may be pointed out that in 1916, when only five strikes occurred, the workers were completely defeated on each occasion.

The decline in the number of workers' victories is undoubtedly directly connected with the great intensification, in recent years, of repressive measures by the Japanese imperialists. Of this the history of the efforts to organise the workers in the port and factories of Dairen is a typical example.

The increase in the number of Chinese factory workers in Dairen and the Japanese leased territory of Kwantung in general was immediately followed by the growth of trade union organisation. In 1923 the workers of the Shakoku workshops of the South Manchuria Railway formed a union. During the next year the union extended to the workers of the Manchuria Dock Company, Dairen, and to cotton mills and factories in the district. Delegates from this union attended the second conference of the National Railway Workers' Union held at Chingchow, Honan, in 1925. By the end of the year the union embarked on a campaign to enroll all the Chinese workers in Dairen. By this time the Japanese imperialists decided the moment had come to act, and in the summer of 1926 they forcibly dissolved the union. This undeniably dealt a severe blow to the growing strike movement.

Nevertheless, unions of Chinese workers exist in several centres. In Harbin the Kunghui, or Harbin Labour Union, is a "left" secession from the old Chinese General Trade Guild. It includes all types of workers—ironworkers, carpenters, tailors, barbers, and so on. Also at Harbin, in 1929, the Chinese Post Office employees formed a union which was later joined by a number of their comrades at Changchun and Mukden. Apart from the Japanese-controlled South Manchuria Railway, there is a Chinese railwaymen's trade union which is stated to have some 5,000 members on the Peking-Mukden line.

These working-class organisations are, potentially, a vital sector of the forces of revolt. While it is true that, owing to the severity of the Japanese military dictatorship, there is at present no outward sign of organised mass resistance by the factory workers to the Japanese domination, there is no hiding the hatred which the Chinese masses feel towards their exploiters. And the history of past strikes points to the certainty of greater struggles in the future. From the ranks of these fighting workers must come the leaders who, unlike such corrupt military adventurers as Ma Chan-shan, will lead the masses in victorious struggle against the united forces of imperialism—Japanese, French, British and American.

## CHAPTER VII

### WHITE AND RED

A JAPANESE sub-editor of the "*Manchuria Daily News*," writing of the visit of the League of Nations' Commission to Harbin, referred to their enjoyment of the pleasures of the "Paris of the East." He was allowing his fancy to run away with his pen. The comparison is not flattering to Paris. There is very little about this windy, dusty, somewhat shabby Manchurian town to remind one of the capital of France. There are, in fact, only two such reminders—one, the large number of cabarets offering "pleasures" similar to those provided specially for foreign tourists in the resorts of Montmartre, and the other the large colony of Russian Whites. It is, indeed, not an accident that these two phenomena occur together in Harbin. Wherever Russian Whites congregate in the East there will be found a flourishing business in the dance café, cabaret and brothel-keeping line. Harbin, I am told, has in recent years lost some of the more dazzling ornaments of this industry to Shanghai, where the Russian White population is steadily increasing, where White prostitution is a serious competitor to the Chinese, and where the entrance to nearly every office-block on Nanking Road bears the name of some quack "specialist in venereal disease." But Harbin holds its own to a degree sufficient to inspire in the Japanese journalist this unflattering comparison with Paris.

Harbin probably owes most of its world-fame to the fact that it is a concentration-point for Whites, and has been the scene of many anti-Soviet outrages. The connection of the Whites—and not merely the brothel-keepers, but important political and military persons—in Paris, the headquarters of anti-Soviet activity, with Harbin has often been clearly demonstrated. I need only recall the provocation of 1929, when the Chinese War-lords, at the instigation of France and other imperialist Powers, tried to seize the Chinese Eastern Railway. On the pretext that the Soviet Consulate and Chinese Eastern Railway headquarters in Harbin were being used for "revolutionary propaganda," the Chinese Government raided the Consulate and arrested some eighty Soviet citizens. "Documents" were, of course, "found" in the Consulate, justifying the Chinese action. But, in fact, the raid was led by Russian Whites, and the documents

of the Consulate were in their possession for some hours before they were handed over to the Chinese police. The "incriminating" documents were inserted, during this interval, in the consular files, by the Whites. But the Whites made the mistake, by which on many other occasions they have given away their trickery, of writing their "incriminating" forgeries in the old Russian orthography, which is never used in Soviet documents. Thus it is clear that this provocation, intended to precipitate war, involving the Soviet Union, in the Far East, was deliberately engineered by the Whites. Of the facts of this incident there is no doubt. They were told to me by a British resident of long standing in Harbin, with a thorough knowledge of the Russian language, who himself inspected these "incriminating" documents, and drew the attention of the Chinese to the fact that they were in the obsolete orthography which is now only used by the Whites.

And it is also proved that the action of the Whites in Harbin was taken in collusion with the anti-Soviet leaders in Paris, who were collaborating with the French military General Staff for the precipitation of a war of intervention against the Soviet Union on the western, as well as the far eastern, front. The co-ordination of these activities, under the direction of leading French politicians, was revealed by the confessions of the members of the anti-Soviet "Industrial Party," who were tried and sentenced in Moscow in November and December, 1930.\*

Thus, then, Harbin as a colony of Russian Whites is a point of great importance to all anti-Soviet forces. And Harbin is now under Japanese military occupation. Further, Japan's most openly in the occupation of Manchuria is France, who tried in 1926 to provoke war, on this very territory, against the Soviet Union. Under the rule of the Japanese military, the Whites are no less active than before. I have referred, in a previous chapter, to the extent and purposes of the White Press in Harbin; and I have referred to the part played by White provocateurs in the hatching of alleged "Red" plots to blow up railway bridges. Naturally, given the very strict watch which the Japanese secret police and military intelligence keep on the movements and activity of everyone in Harbin, it is impossible for the Whites to operate without the consent and support of the Japanese. In 1932, then, Harbin presents an advance on 1929, from the imperialist point of view, in anti-

\*See *The Wreckers Exposed*, by W. M. Holmes (2d.), an account of the trial, and *The Wreckers on Trial* (2s. 6d.), a verbatim report, both published by Modern Books, Ltd., London, and Workers' Library Publishers, New York.

Soviet forces. In 1929 we had only the Chinese war-lords and the White provocateurs directed and financed by French imperialism. Now we have a Japanese army of four or five divisions advancing north and east and preparing to push west; we have the Whites busy in their sphere of agitation and provocation; we have the support of French and British imperialists for the whole enterprise—how active their support is, may be judged by the endless stream of British war-munitions which is flowing into Japan.

Harbin, then, has become something more serious than our flowery Dairen friend's "Paris of the East." It is the centre of preparation for Japanese imperialism's big drive, towards Eastern Siberia, for the attempt to seize Vladivostok and the Pacific seaboard. The most common subject of speculation among foreigners in Harbin nowadays is, "When will the Japanese fight the Bolsheviks?" There is difference of opinion about the probable date, but there is unanimity of opinion that the Japanese are preparing for the attack. It must be said that inter-imperialist conflicts and contradictions find their reflection in these discussions also. I have heard an American business man say, "Well, when it comes, the Japanese will get the licking of their lives, and serve them right!" Which did not mean only that he, in common with many capitalists in the Far East, felt that a war was a desirable thing—"to clear the air." This American, like many others, is willing to see Japan beaten by the Soviet Union, because he thinks this will check the excessive expansion of Japanese imperialism in China, and give America the chance to step in and take a larger share of the loot. Thus, all the imperialists in the East, from varying points of view, accept and desire the war which they believe will be precipitated by Japan's occupation of Manchuria. All of them, of course, desire first and foremost the breaking down of the Soviet power and the splitting up of the rich lands of the Soviet Union into imperialist spheres of exploitation. But they are divided by rivalries. The Japanese imperialists' dream, put into words by Baron Tanaka (1), in the memorandum in which he proposed conquest of all the Russian lands east of Lake Baikal, and of Mongolia into the bargain, causes the American imperialists to stir uneasily. A Japanese empire monopolising all of the important ports of the Western Pacific seaboard, except those which are under British domination, and spreading over perhaps the richest territory of Asia, cannot be accepted without a struggle by American imperialism. Thus, the Americans would gladly see Japan "licked"

(1) See *Japanese Imperialism Stripped*. 1d. (Modern Books, Ltd.) A full reprint of the memorandum.

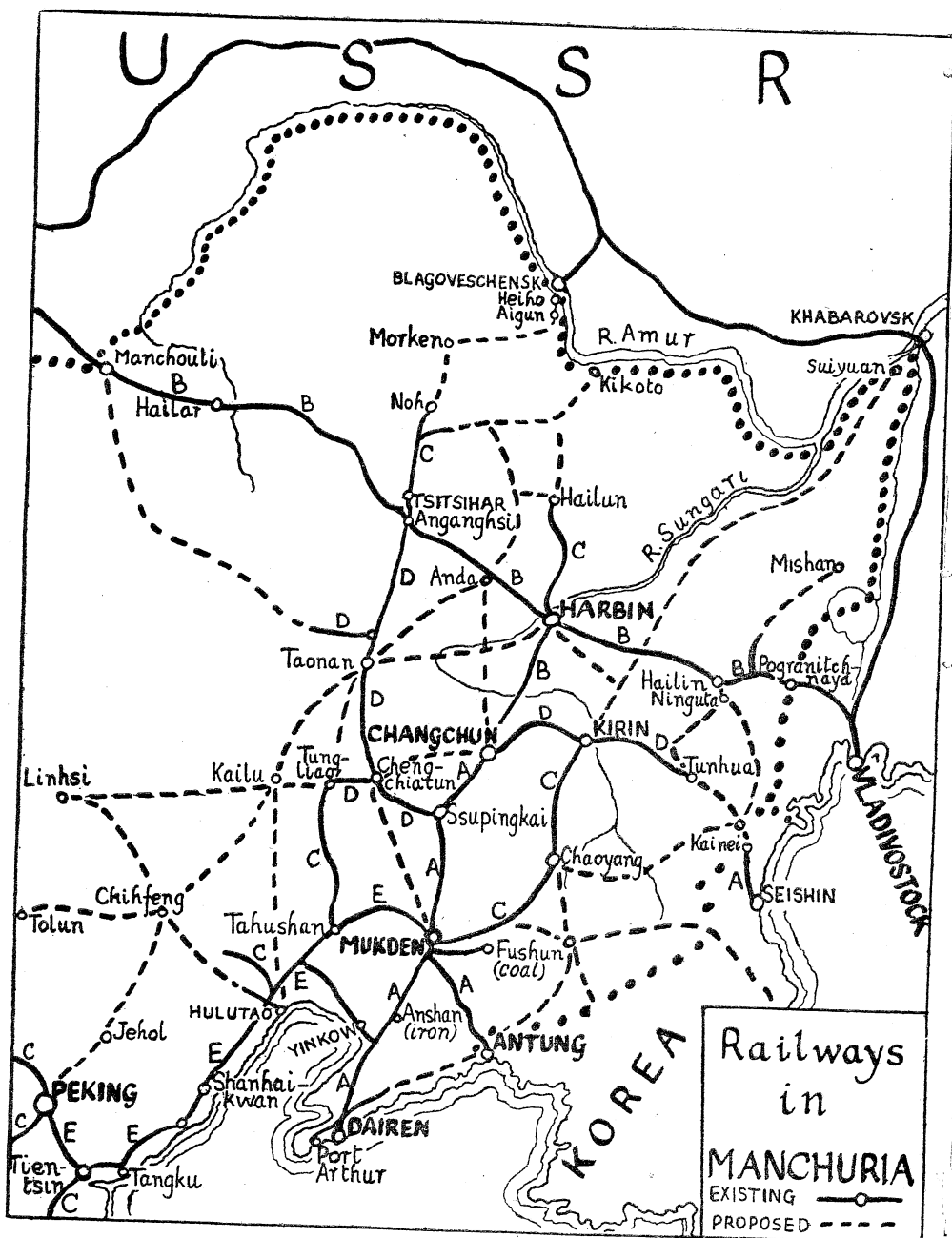
by the Soviet Union, and then step in and seize the spoils from the exhausted victors.

This is the situation to which nearly half a century of imperialist rivalry has brought Manchuria. Already the scene of past bloody wars, it is now set out as the stage for a conflict more terrible than any the East, and perhaps the whole world, has yet seen. All the imperialist forces are ready for war; every imperialist mind accepts and desires it. There is only one factor in the East which makes for peace. That is the unwavering policy of the Soviet Government. Had an imperialist Government held power over the territory of Eastern Siberia there would long ago have been war. The Russo-Japanese war of 1905 was precipitated by incidents far less provocative than those recently engineered on the Chinese Eastern Railway and in the Soviet border districts by the Japanese imperialists and their White agents. All the forces of the U.S.S.R., its policy and diplomacy, make for peace. This is admitted by the observers on the spot. In their discussions in Harbin you will frequently hear the remark, "Well, the Soviets won't start it, anyhow." Not even the most imperialistically-minded ever think of accusing the Soviet Union of planning an attack on Manchuria. Stalin's words, "We do not covet a foot of foreign soil, but we will not give up a hand's-breadth of our own," are not regarded as the hollow hypocrisy of an imperialist politician. Experience has taught the Far East, at any rate, that the spokesmen of the Soviet Union mean what they say—and they are taken at their word.

But Japanese imperialism is preparing its blow. The other imperialisms are lined up behind it. And the blow will fall, sooner or later. This is the testimony of all eye-witnesses in Manchuria. The object of my journey was to help to prepare the workers of the world to strike their blow also, for Socialism and against imperialism, and the exploitation of downtrodden peoples. The facts seen and recorded here leave us no alternative but to take up our place on the side of the workers' and peasants' republic.

The Soviet Union, by its policy of peace in the Far East, is the only bulwark protecting the world's workers from a new and terrible war. It is imperialism—not only Japanese, but British, French, and American—which keeps China in a state of war. To aid the Chinese workers to clear out all the imperialists, and to build an international united front of the working class for the overthrow of imperialism everywhere, is our only road to the end of exploitation and the beginning of lasting peace.

# U S S R



Railways  
in

MANCHURIA

EXISTING —○—  
PROPOSED - - -